Domestic Girlfriend

11

KEI SASUGA

DOMEXGIRL

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11

DOME
GIRL

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DOME GIRL

11

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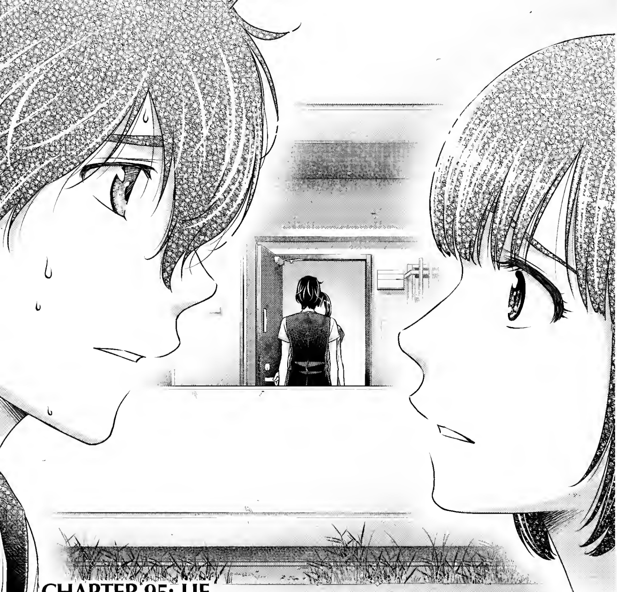
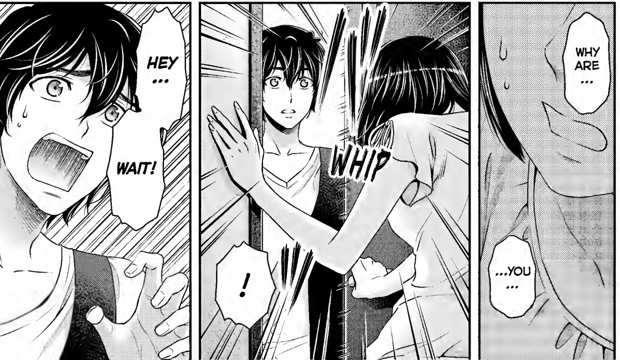
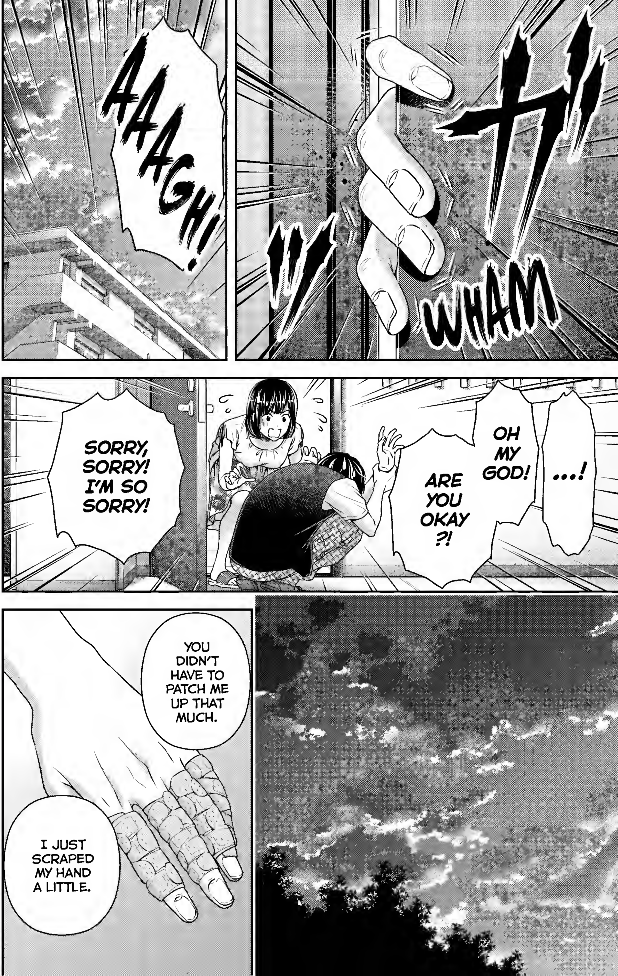
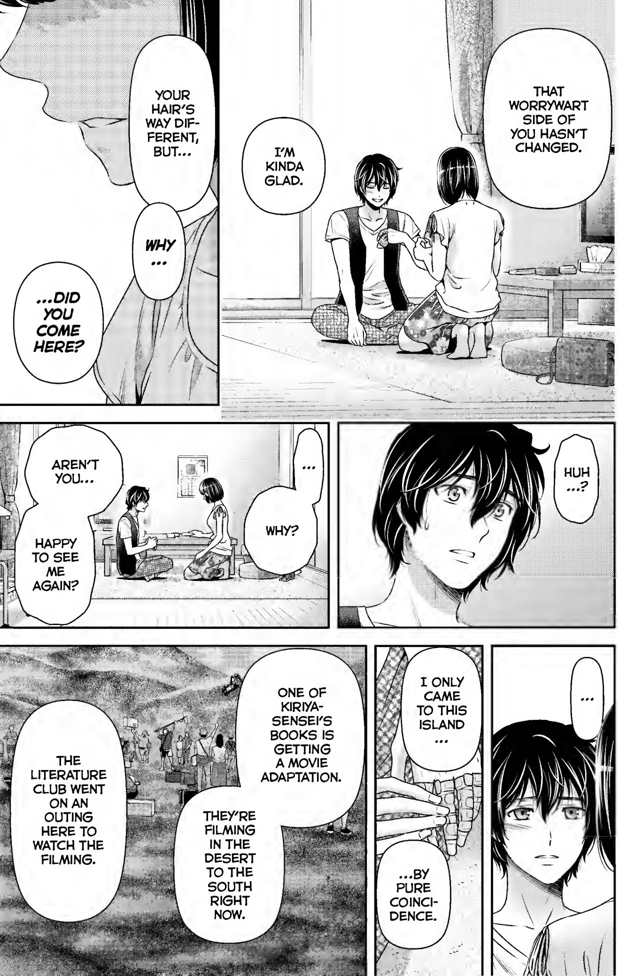
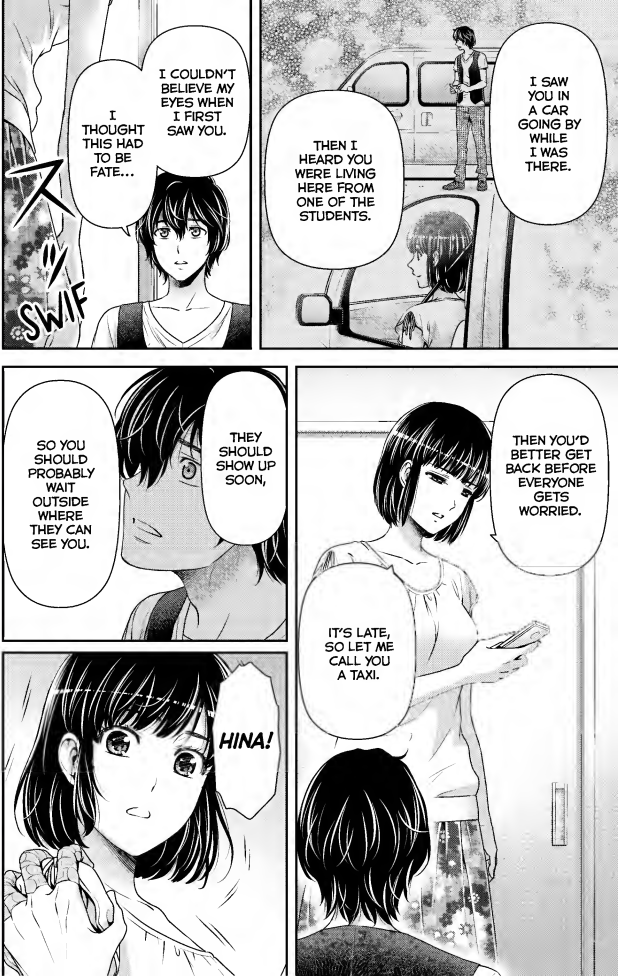


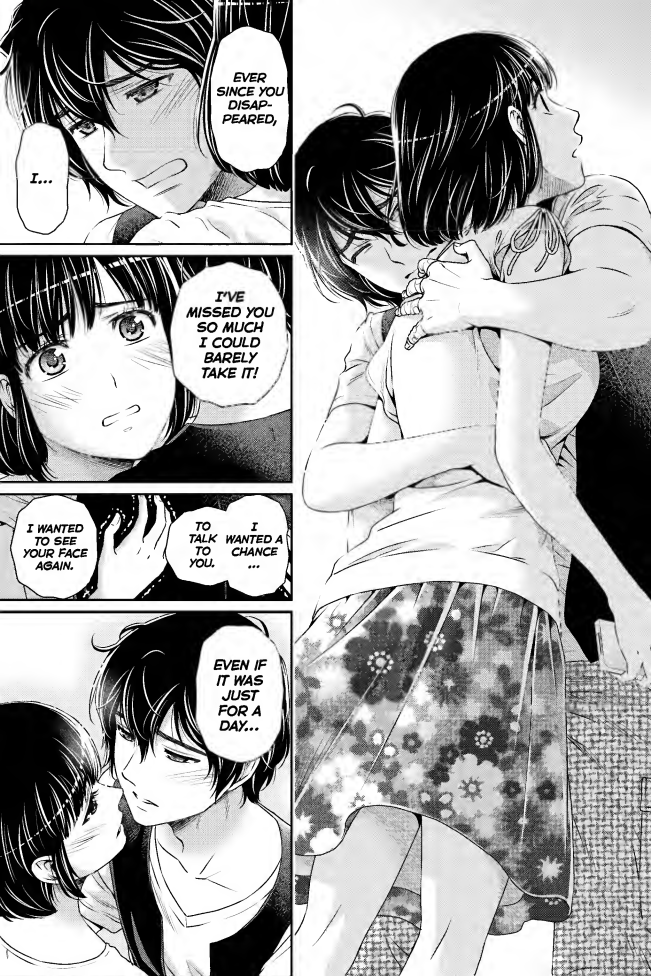
CHAPTER 95: LIE

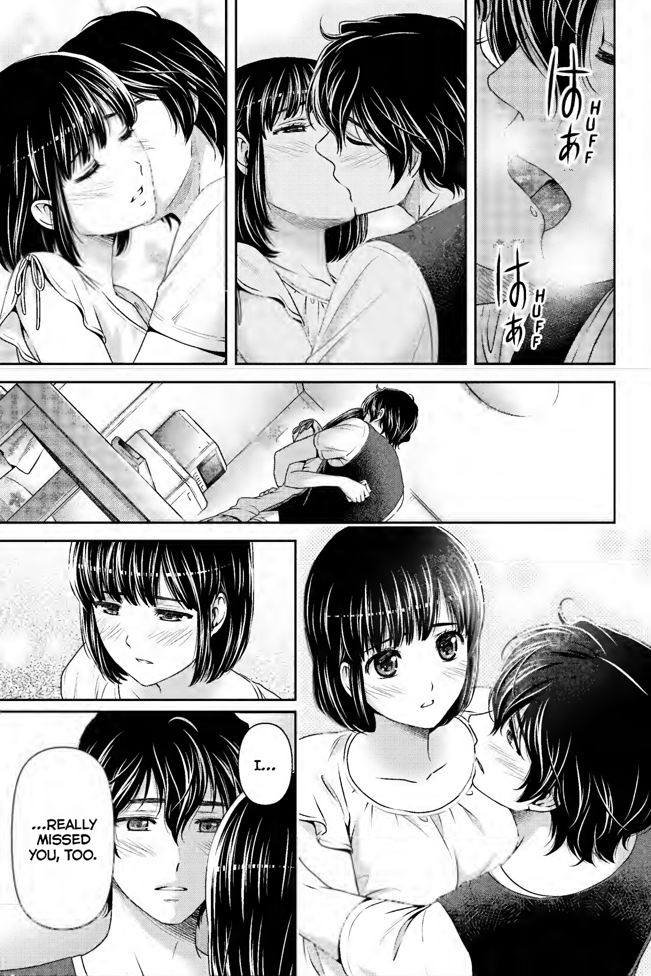

WHY ARE ...
...YOU ...
WHIP
!
HEY ...
WAIT!

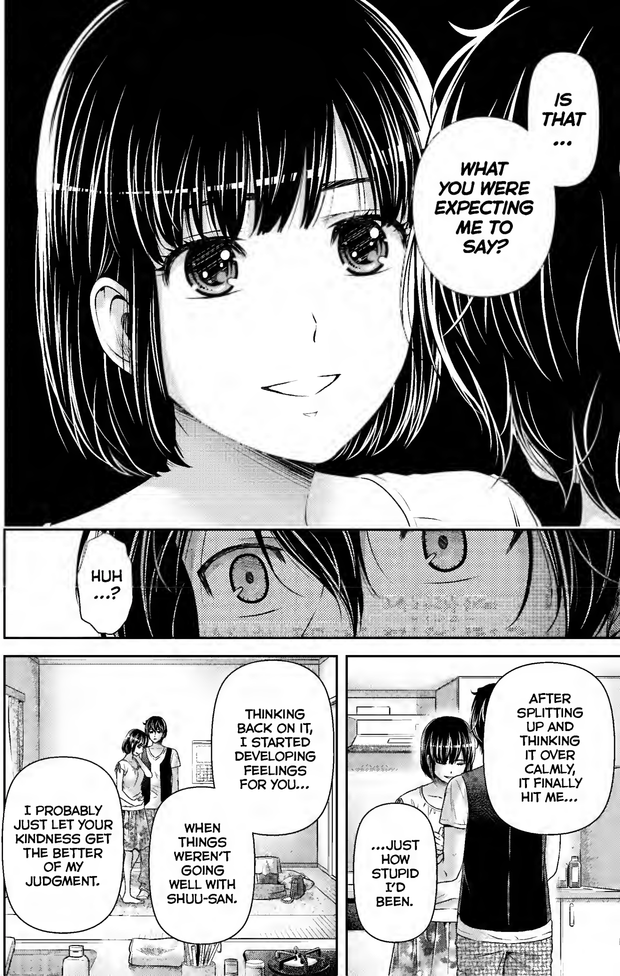

ガッ
WHAM
AAAGH!
...!
OH MY GOD!
ARE YOU OKAY?!
SORRY, SORRY! I'M SO SORRY!
YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO PATCH ME UP THAT MUCH.
I JUST SCRAPED MY HAND A LITTLE.

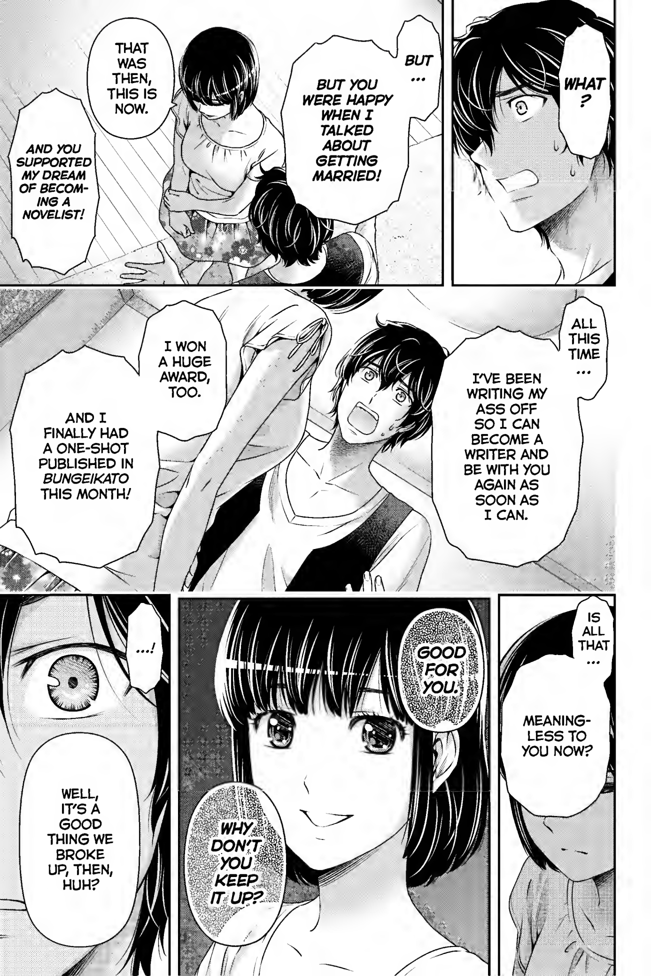

THAT WORRYWART SIDE OF YOU HASN'T CHANGED.
I'M KINDA GLAD.
YOUR HAIR'S WAY DIFFERENT, BUT...
WHY...
...DID YOU COME HERE?
HUH...?
...
WHY?
AREN'T YOU...
HAPPY TO SEE ME AGAIN?
...
I ONLY CAME TO THIS ISLAND...
...BY PURE COINCIDENCE.
ONE OF KIRIYA-SENSEI'S BOOKS IS GETTING A MOVIE ADAPTATION.
THEY'RE FILMING IN THE DESERT TO THE SOUTH RIGHT NOW.
THE LITERATURE CLUB WENT ON AN OUTING HERE TO WATCH THE FILMING.

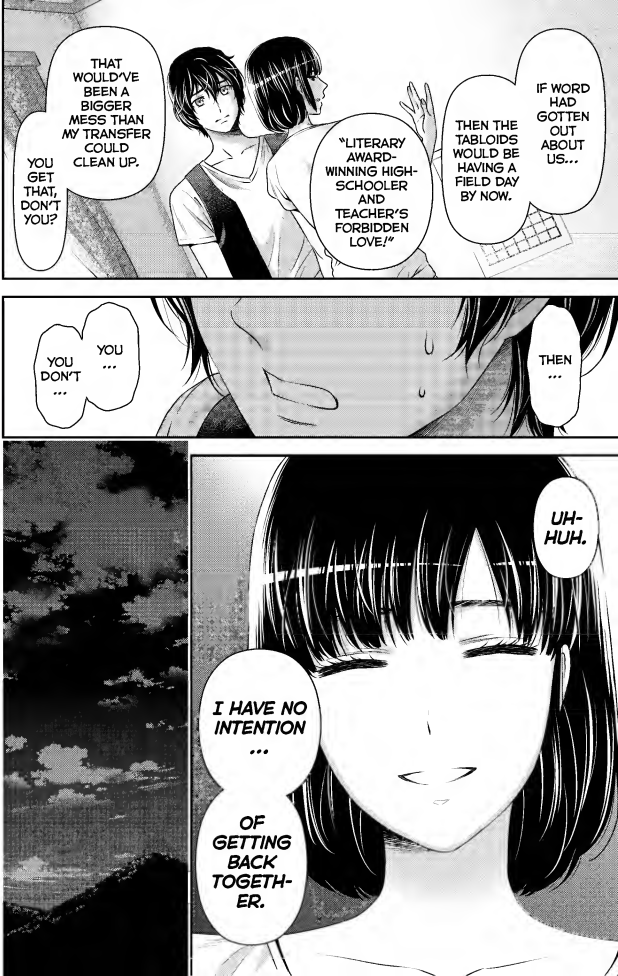

I SAW YOU IN A CAR GOING BY WHILE I WAS THERE.
THEN I HEARD YOU WERE LIVING HERE FROM ONE OF THE STUDENTS.
I COULDN'T BELIEVE MY EYES WHEN I FIRST SAW YOU.
I THOUGHT THIS HAD TO BE FATE...
スッ
SWIF
THEN YOU'D BETTER GET BACK BEFORE EVERYONE GETS WORRIED.
IT'S LATE, SO LET ME CALL YOU A TAXI.
THEY SHOULD SHOW UP SOON,
SO YOU SHOULD PROBABLY WAIT OUTSIDE WHERE THEY CAN SEE YOU.
HINA!

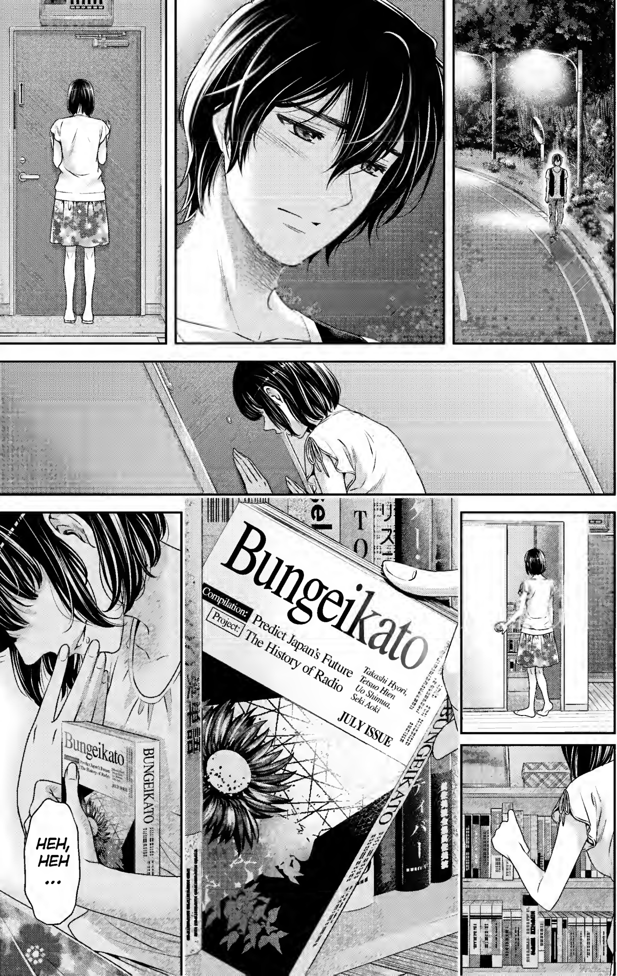

EVER SINCE YOU DISAPPEARED,
I...
I'VE MISSED YOU SO MUCH I COULD BARELY TAKE IT!
I WANTED A CHANCE...
TO TALK TO YOU.
I WANTED TO SEE YOUR FACE AGAIN.
EVEN IF IT WAS JUST FOR A DAY...

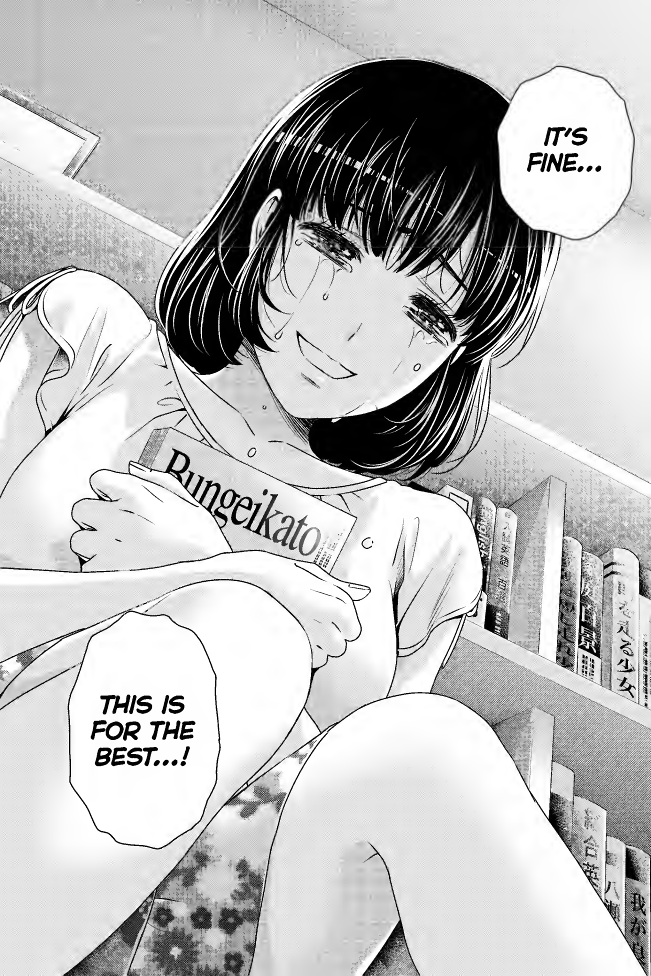

はあ HUFF
はあ HUFF
I...
...REALLY MISSED YOU, TOO.

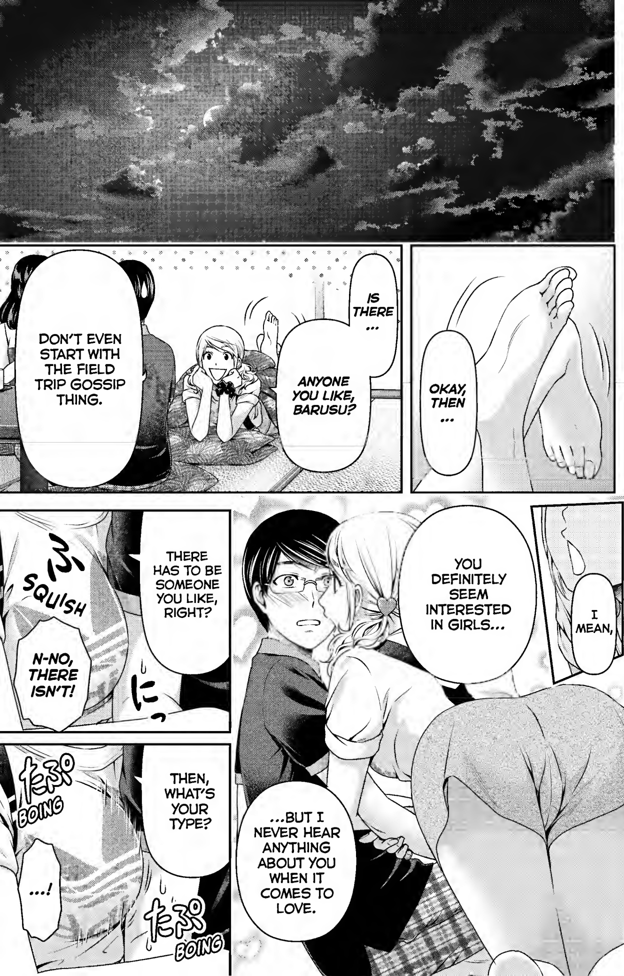

IS THAT ...
WHAT YOU WERE EXPECTING ME TO SAY?
HUH ...?
AFTER SPLITTING UP AND THINKING IT OVER CALMLY, IT FINALLY HIT ME...
...JUST HOW STUPID I'D BEEN.
THINKING BACK ON IT, I STARTED DEVELOPING FEELINGS FOR YOU...
WHEN THINGS WEREN'T GOING WELL WITH SHUU-SAN.
I PROBABLY JUST LET YOUR KINDNESS GET THE BETTER OF MY JUDGMENT.

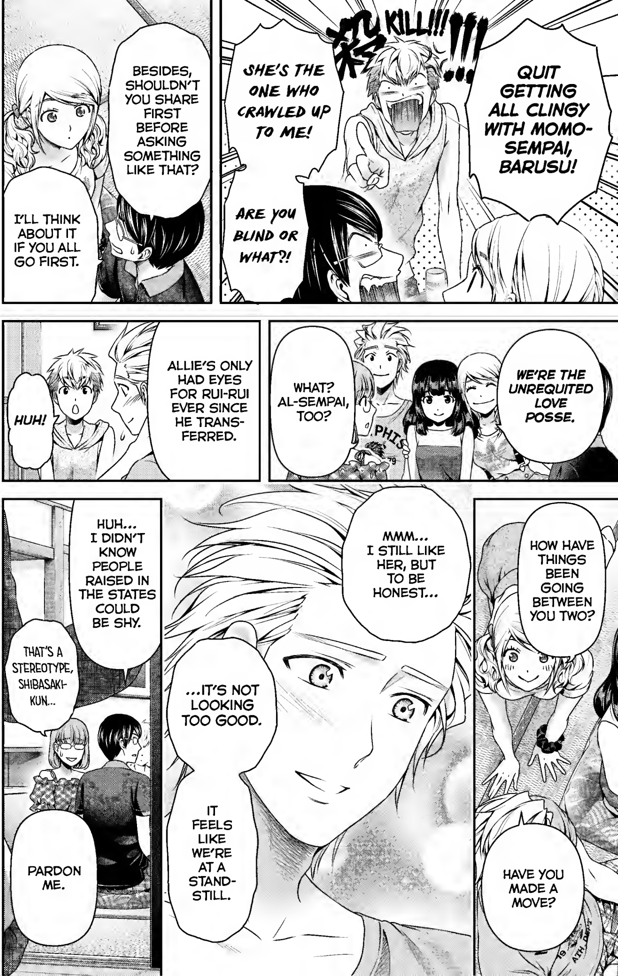

WHAT?
BUT...
BUT YOU WERE HAPPY WHEN I TALKED ABOUT GETTING MARRIED!
THAT WAS THEN, THIS IS NOW.
AND YOU SUPPORTED MY DREAM OF BECOMING A NOVELIST!
ALL THIS TIME...
I'VE BEEN WRITING MY ASS OFF SO I CAN BECOME A WRITER AND BE WITH YOU AGAIN AS SOON AS I CAN.
I WON A HUGE AWARD, TOO.
AND I FINALLY HAD A ONE-SHOT PUBLISHED IN *BUNGEIKATO* THIS MONTH!
IS ALL THAT...
MEANINGLESS TO YOU NOW?
GOOD FOR YOU.
WHY DON'T YOU KEEP IT UP?
...!
WELL, IT'S A GOOD THING WE BROKE UP, THEN, HUH?

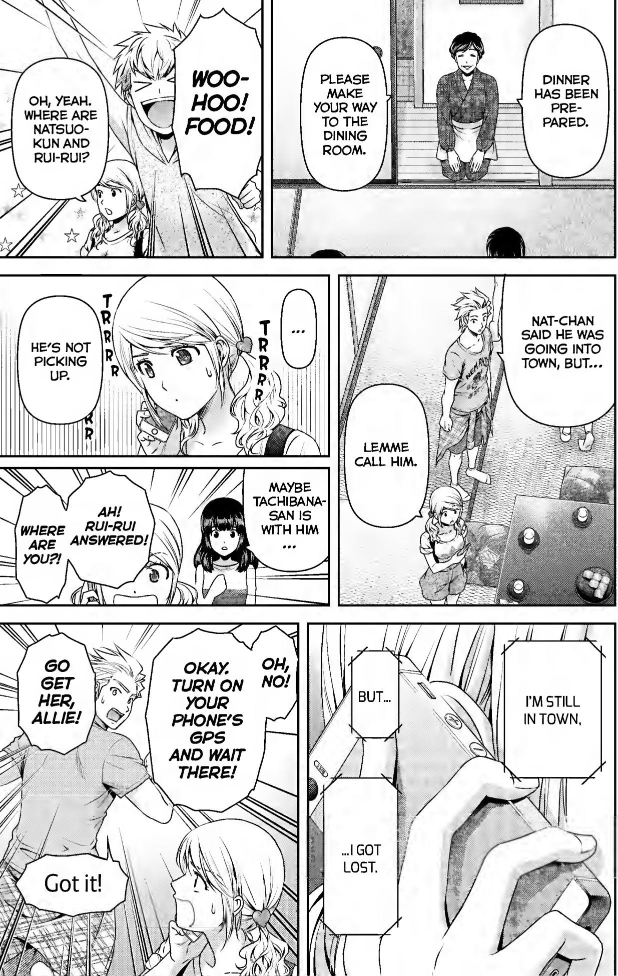

IF WORD HAD GOTTEN OUT ABOUT US...
THEN THE TABLOIDS WOULD BE HAVING A FIELD DAY BY NOW.
"LITERARY AWARD-WINNING HIGH-SCHOOLER AND TEACHER'S FORBIDDEN LOVE!"
THAT WOULD'VE BEEN A BIGGER MESS THAN MY TRANSFER COULD CLEAN UP.
YOU GET THAT, DON'T YOU?
THEN...
YOU...
YOU DON'T...
UH-HUH.
I HAVE NO INTENTION...
OF GETTING BACK TOGETHER.

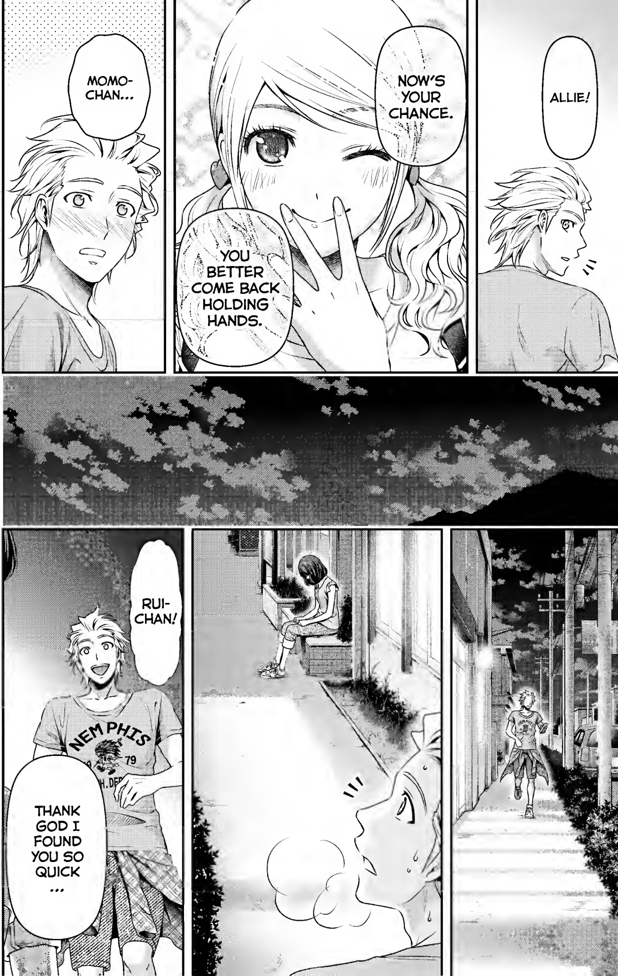

Bungeikato
Compilation: Predict Japan's Future
Project: The History of Radio
Takashi Hyori, Tetsuo Hien, Uo Shimua, Seki Aoki
JULY ISSUE
BUNGEIKATO
Bungeikato
BUNGEIKATO
HEH, HEH ...

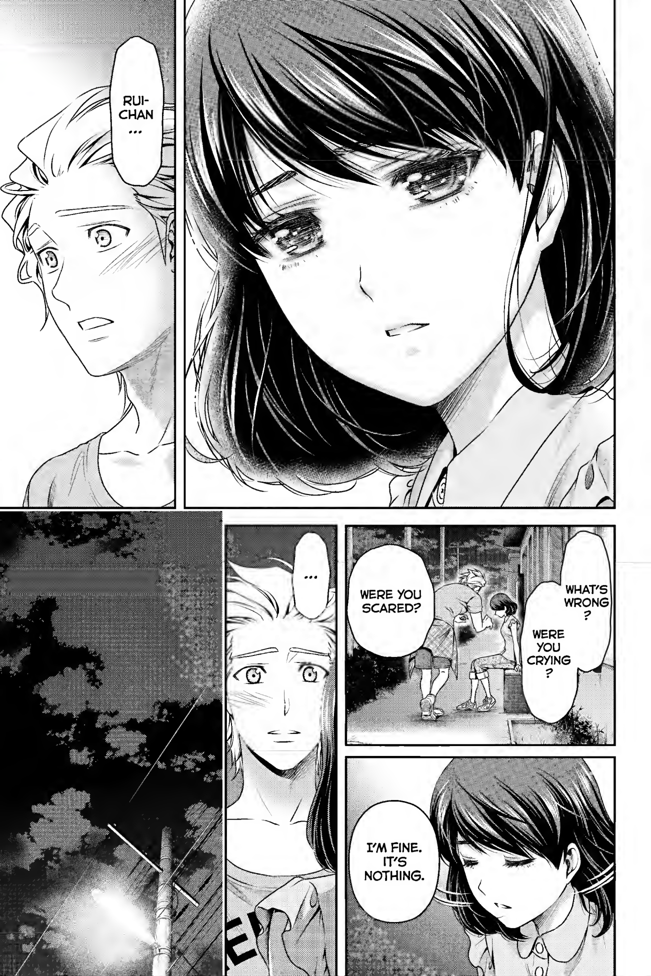

IT'S FINE...
Bungeikato
THIS IS FOR THE BEST...!

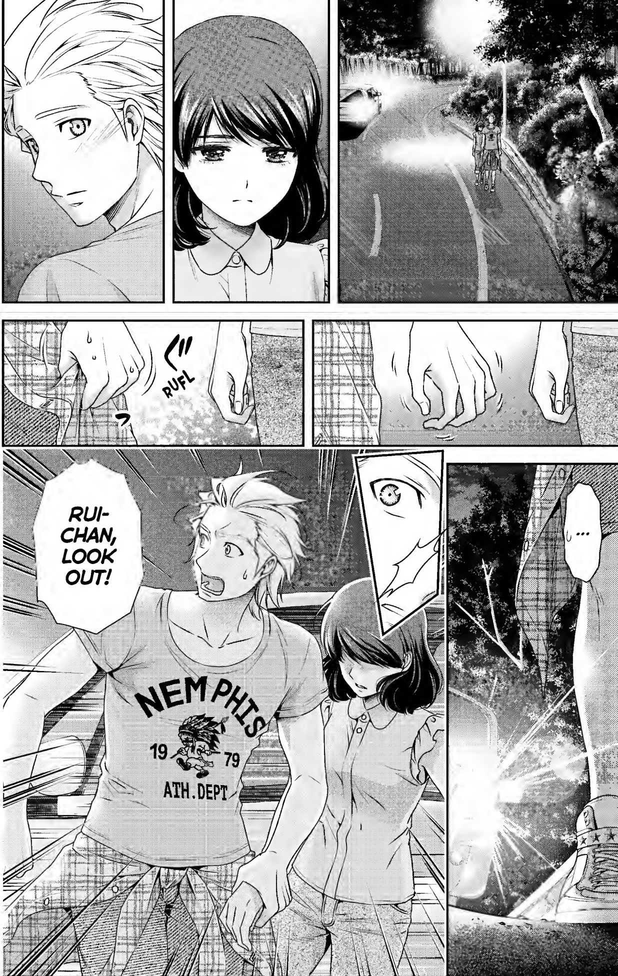

OKAY, THEN...
IS THERE...
ANYONE YOU LIKE, BARUSU?
DON'T EVEN START WITH THE FIELD TRIP GOSSIP THING.
I MEAN,
YOU DEFINITELY SEEM INTERESTED IN GIRLS...
...BUT I NEVER HEAR ANYTHING ABOUT YOU WHEN IT COMES TO LOVE.
THERE HAS TO BE SOMEONE YOU LIKE, RIGHT?
ふ
SQUISH
にっ
N-NO, THERE ISN'T!
THEN, WHAT'S YOUR TYPE?
たぷ
BOING
...!
たぷ
BOING

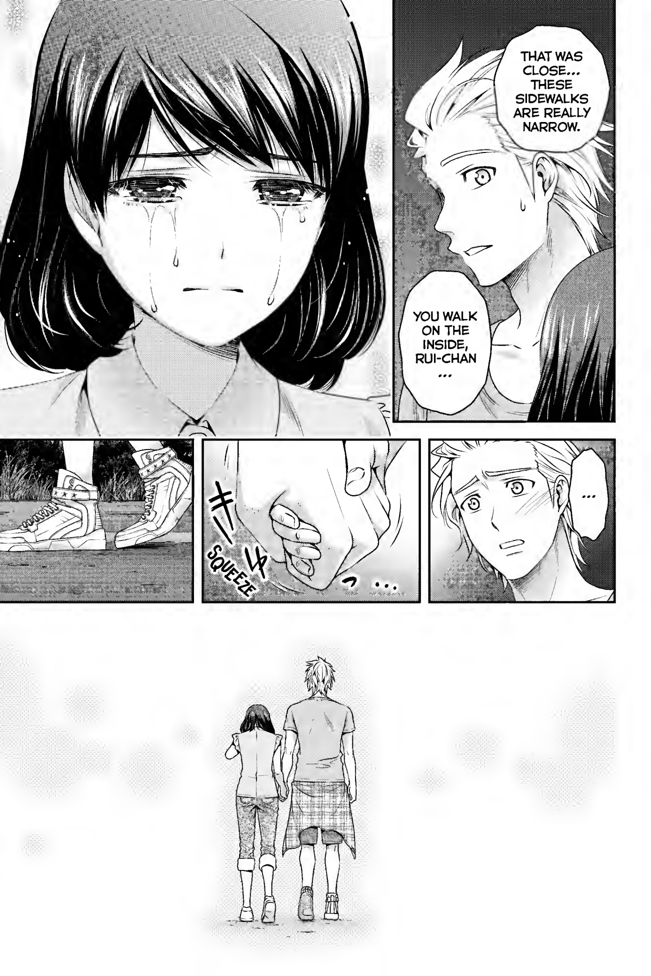

QUIT GETTING ALL CLINGY WITH MOMO-SEMPAI, BARUSU!
KILL!!!
SHE'S THE ONE WHO CRAWLED UP TO ME!
ARE YOU BLIND OR WHAT?!
BESIDES, SHOULDN'T YOU SHARE FIRST BEFORE ASKING SOMETHING LIKE THAT?
I'LL THINK ABOUT IT IF YOU ALL GO FIRST.
WE'RE THE UNREQUITED LOVE POSSE.
WHAT? AL-SEMPAI, TOO?
ALLIE'S ONLY HAD EYES FOR RUI-RUI EVER SINCE HE TRANSFERRED.
HUH!
HOW HAVE THINGS BEEN GOING BETWEEN YOU TWO?
HAVE YOU MADE A MOVE?
MMM... I STILL LIKE HER, BUT TO BE HONEST...
...IT'S NOT LOOKING TOO GOOD.
IT FEELS LIKE WE'RE AT A STANDSTILL.
HUH... I DIDN'T KNOW PEOPLE RAISED IN THE STATES COULD BE SHY.
THAT'S A STEREOTYPE, SHIBASAKI-KUN...
PARDON ME.

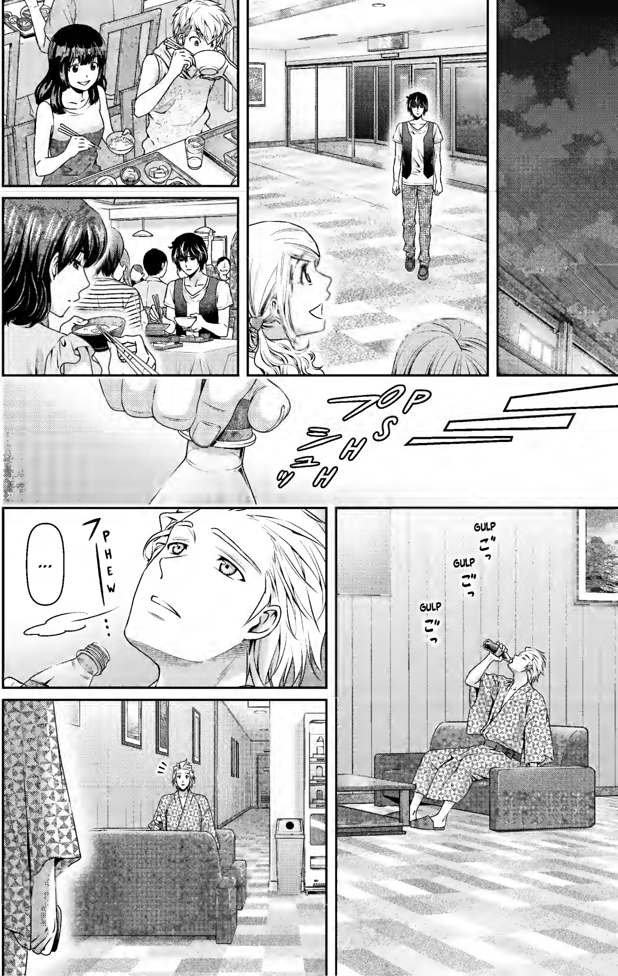

DINNER HAS BEEN PREPARED.
PLEASE MAKE YOUR WAY TO THE DINING ROOM.
WOO-HOO! FOOD!
OH, YEAH. WHERE ARE NATSUO-KUN AND RUI-RUI?
NAT-CHAN SAID HE WAS GOING INTO TOWN, BUT...
LEMME CALL HIM.
...
TRRRRR
TRRRRR
HE'S NOT PICKING UP.
MAYBE TACHIBANA-SAN IS WITH HIM...
AH! RUI-RUI ANSWERED!
WHERE ARE YOU?!
I'M STILL IN TOWN,
BUT...
...I GOT LOST.
OH, NO!
OKAY. TURN ON YOUR PHONE'S GPS AND WAIT THERE!
GO GET HER, ALLIE!
Got it!

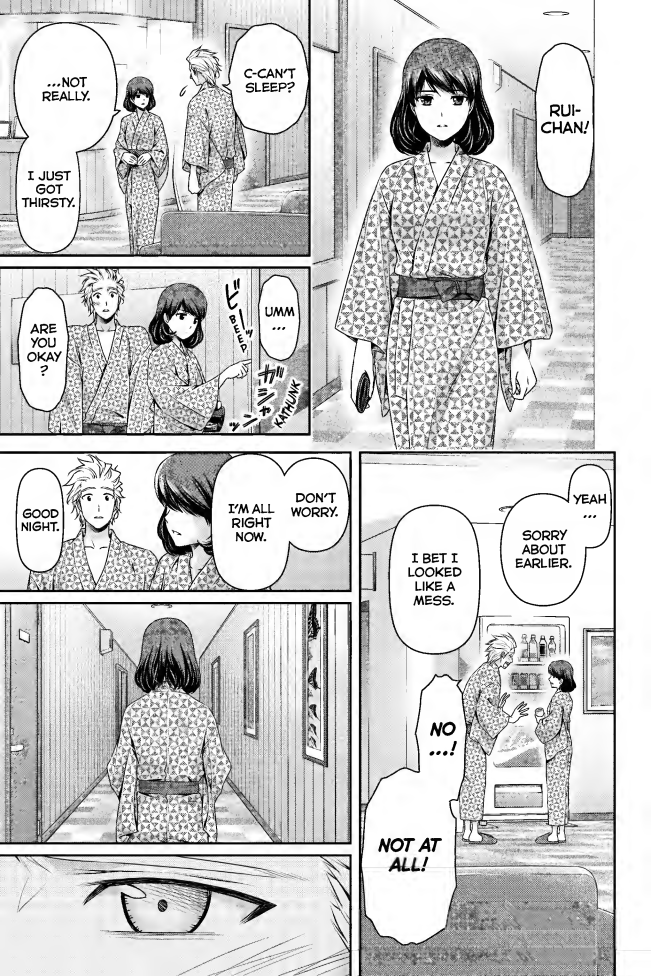

ALLIE!
NOW'S YOUR CHANCE.
YOU BETTER COME BACK HOLDING HANDS.
MOMO-CHAN...
RUI-CHAN!
NEMPHIS
79
THANK GOD I FOUND YOU SO QUICK ...

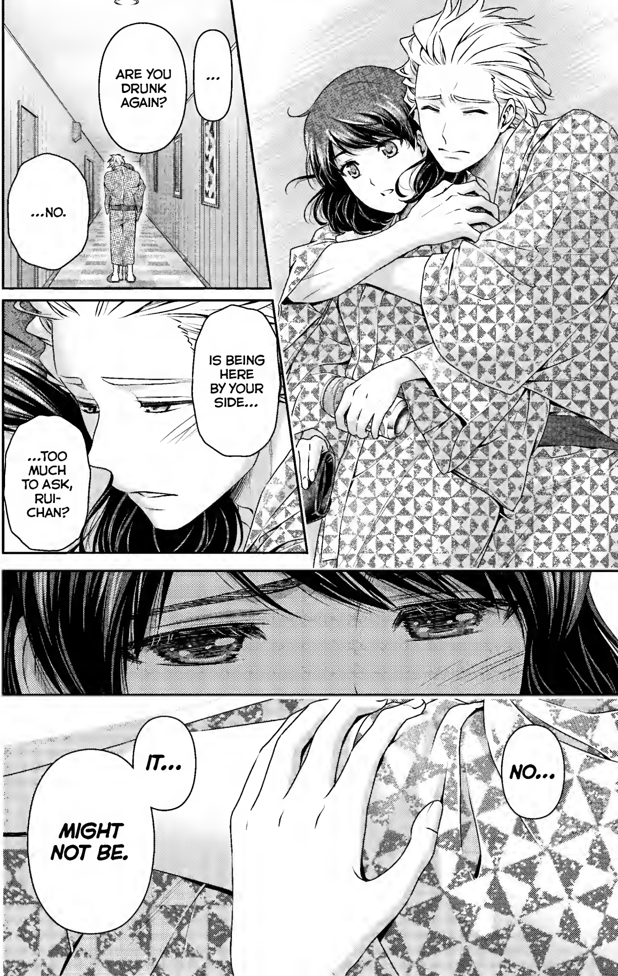

RUI-CHAN ...
WHAT'S WRONG?
WERE YOU CRYING?
WERE YOU SCARED?
...
I'M FINE. IT'S NOTHING.


RUFL
...
RUI-CHAN, LOOK OUT!
NEMPHIS
19 79
ATH.DEPT

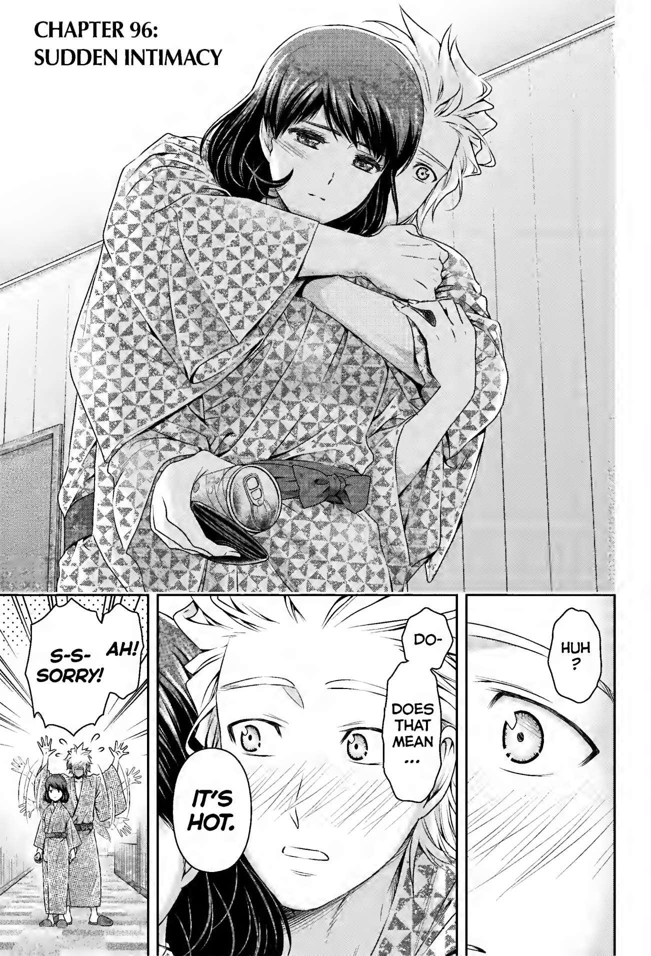

THAT WAS CLOSE... THESE SIDEWALKS ARE REALLY NARROW.
YOU WALK ON THE INSIDE, RUI-CHAN ...
...
キュ
SQUEEZE
...

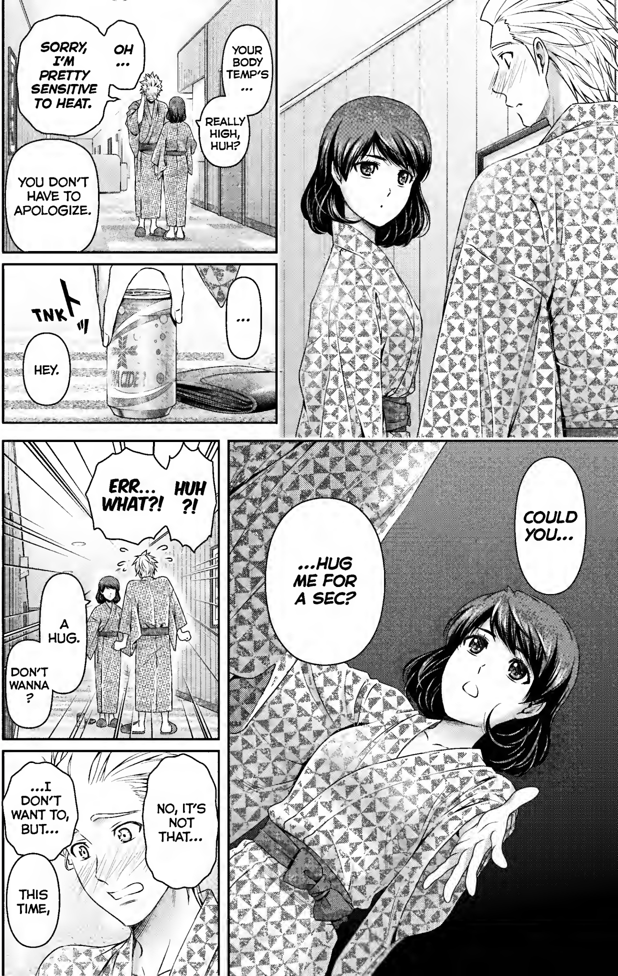

プシュッ
POP
SHHH
GULP ごっ
GULP ごっ
GULP ごっ
フ PHEW...
...

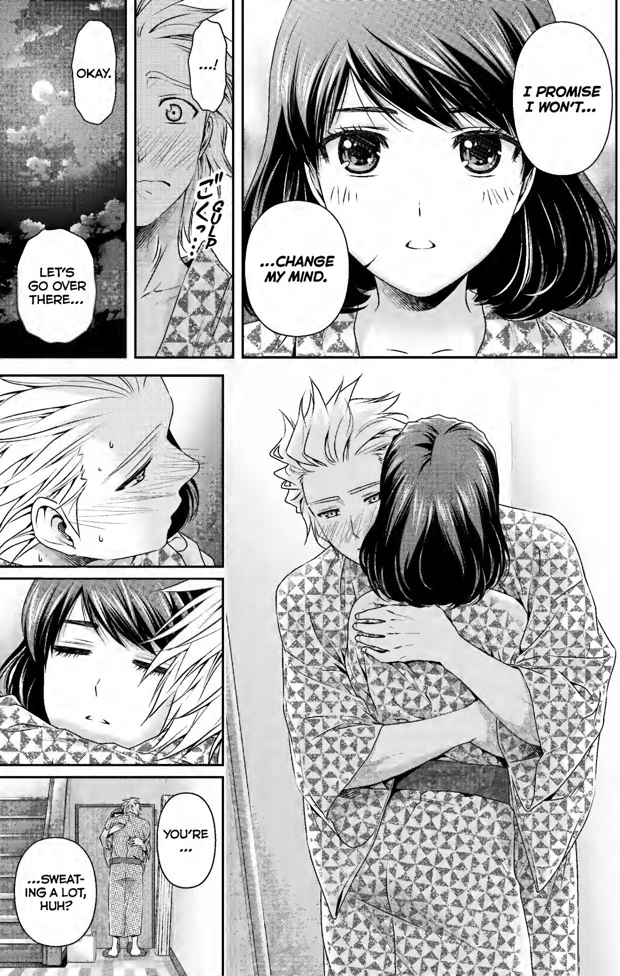

RUI-CHAN!
C-CAN'T SLEEP?
...NOT REALLY.
I JUST GOT THIRSTY.
UMM...
ビー BEEP
ガシャン KATHUNK
ARE YOU OKAY?
YEAH...
SORRY ABOUT EARLIER.
I BET I LOOKED LIKE A MESS.
NO...!
NOT AT ALL!
DON'T WORRY.
I'M ALL RIGHT NOW.
GOOD NIGHT.

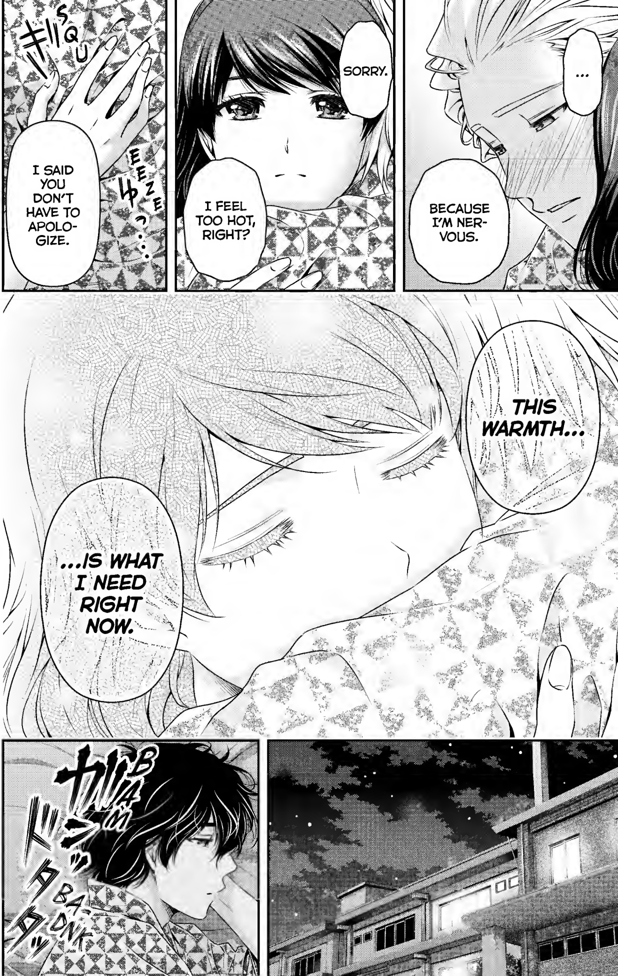

...
ARE YOU DRUNK AGAIN?
...NO.
IS BEING HERE BY YOUR SIDE...
...TOO MUCH TO ASK, RUI-CHAN?
NO...
IT... MIGHT NOT BE.

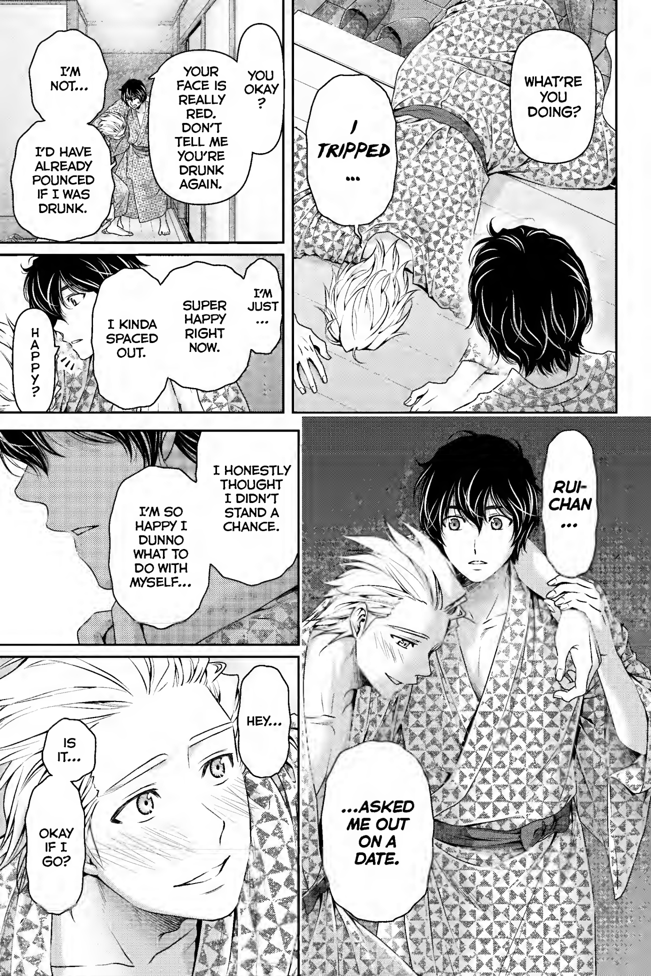
CHAPTER 96: SUDDEN INTIMACY

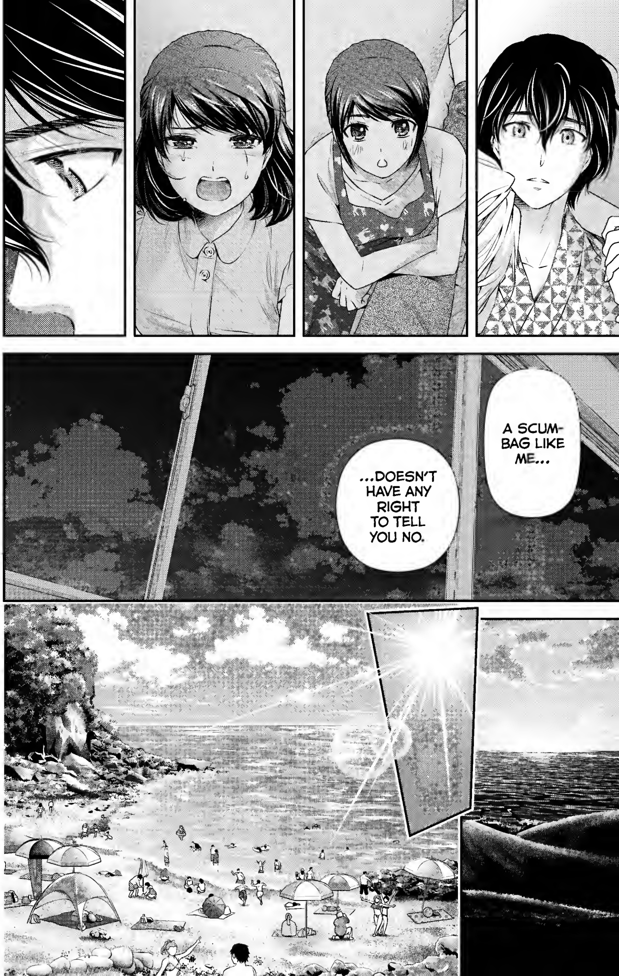

HUH?
DO-
DOES THAT MEAN...
IT'S HOT.
AH!
S-S-SORRY!

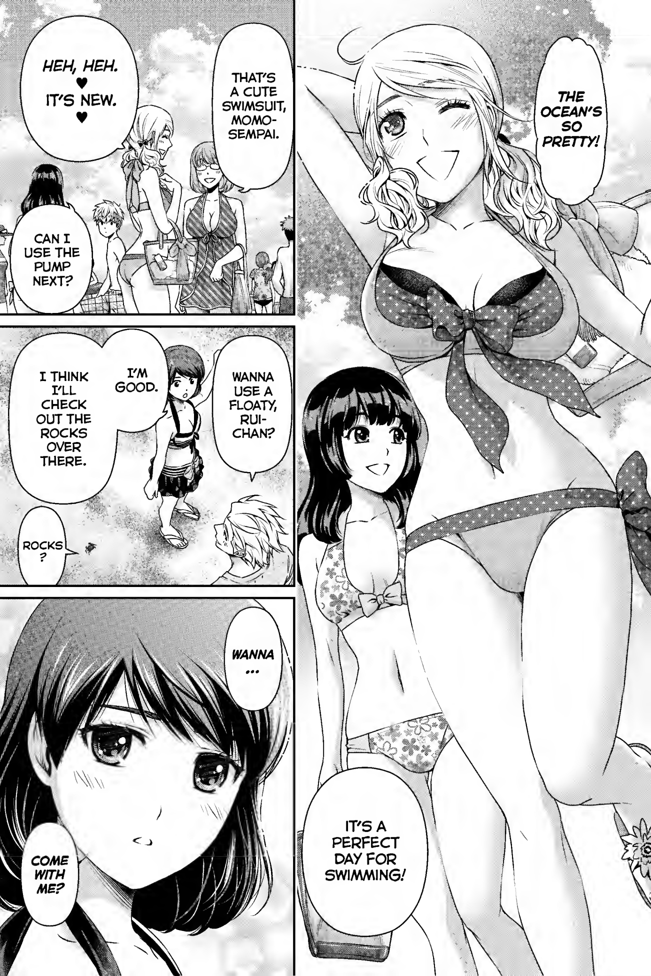

YOUR BODY TEMP'S ...
REALLY HIGH, HUH?
OH ...
SORRY, I'M PRETTY SENSITIVE TO HEAT.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO APOLOGIZE.
...
TNK
HEY.
COULD YOU...
...HUG ME FOR A SEC?
HUH ?!
ERR... WHAT?!
A HUG.
DON'T WANNA ?
NO, IT'S NOT THAT...
...I DON'T WANT TO, BUT...
THIS TIME,

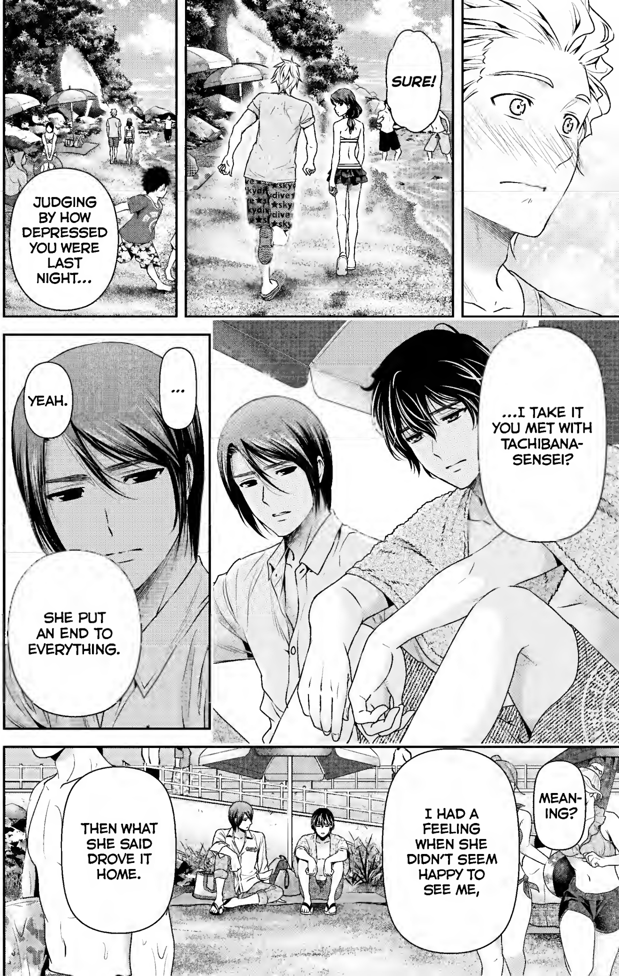

I PROMISE I WON'T...
...CHANGE MY MIND.
...!
ごくっ
GULP
OKAY.
LET'S GO OVER THERE...
YOU'RE ...
...SWEATING A LOT, HUH?

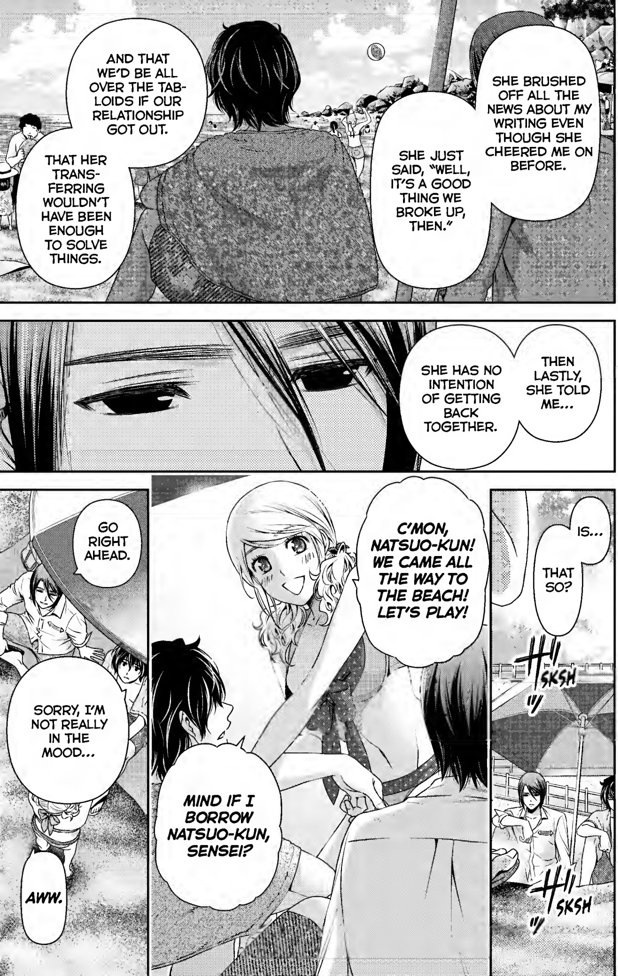

...
BECAUSE I'M NERVOUS.
SORRY.
I FEEL TOO HOT, RIGHT?
SQUEEZE
I SAID YOU DON'T HAVE TO APOLOGIZE.
THIS WARMTH...
...IS WHAT I NEED RIGHT NOW.
カッ
BAM
ドタタッ
BA-DNK

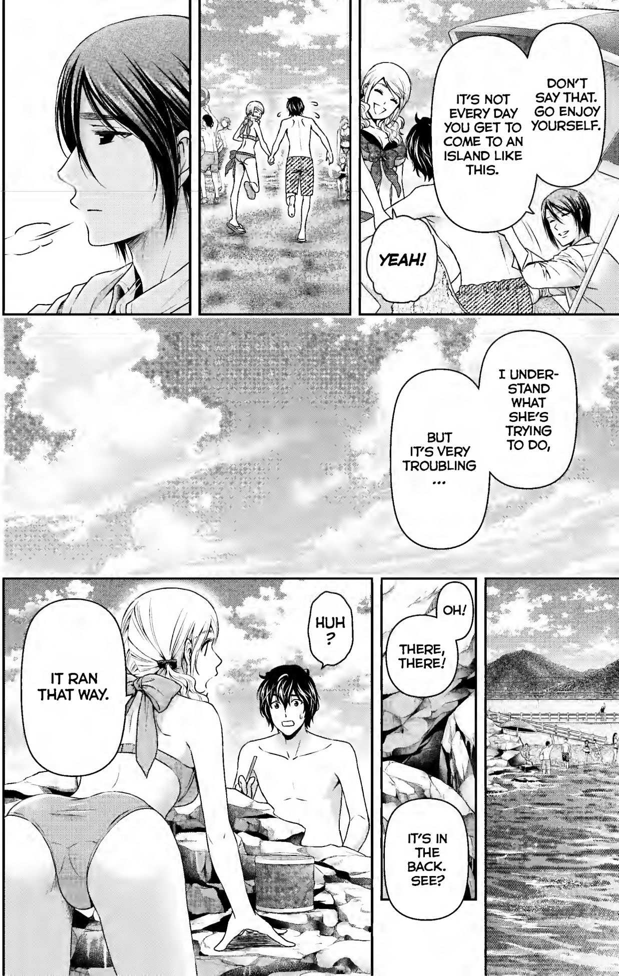

WHAT'RE YOU DOING?
I TRIPPED...
YOU OKAY?
YOUR FACE IS REALLY RED. DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE DRUNK AGAIN.
I'M NOT...
I'D HAVE ALREADY POUNCED IF I WAS DRUNK.
I'M JUST...
SUPER HAPPY RIGHT NOW.
I KINDA SPACED OUT.
HAPPY?
RUI-CHAN...
I HONESTLY THOUGHT I DIDN'T STAND A CHANCE.
I'M SO HAPPY I DUNNO WHAT TO DO WITH MYSELF...
...ASKED ME OUT ON A DATE.
HEY...
IS IT...
OKAY IF I GO?

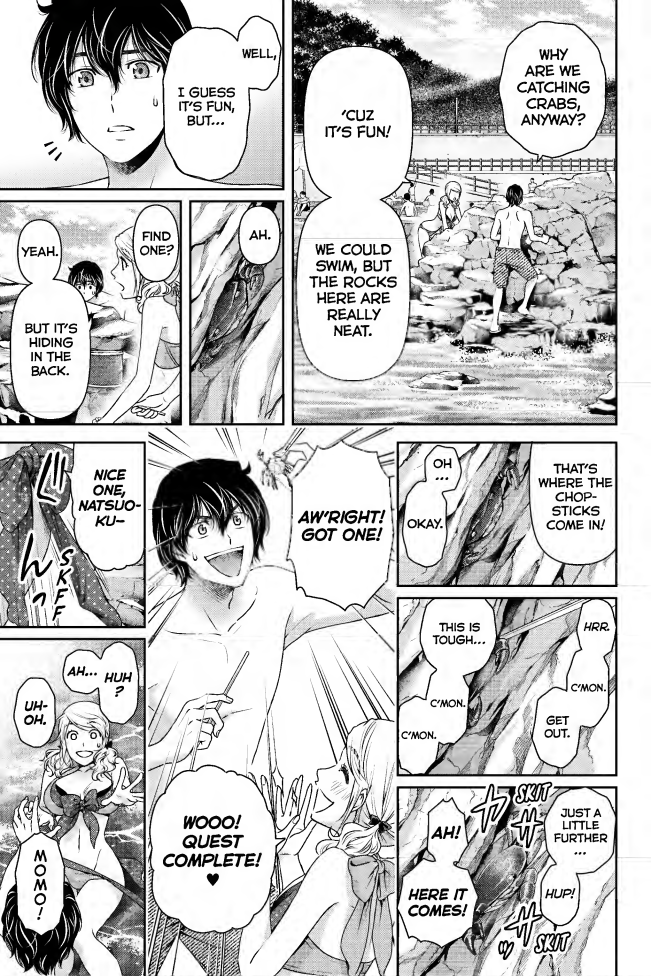

A SCUMBAG LIKE ME...
...DOESN'T HAVE ANY RIGHT TO TELL YOU NO.

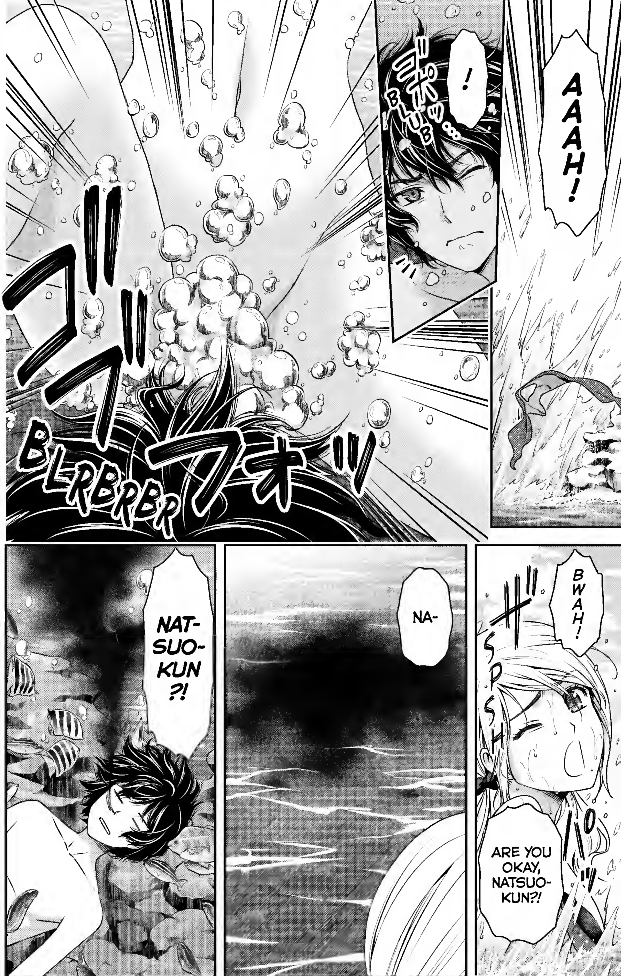

THE OCEAN'S SO PRETTY!
IT'S A PERFECT DAY FOR SWIMMING!
THAT'S A CUTE SWIMSUIT, MOMO-SEMPAI.
HEH, HEH. ♥ IT'S NEW. ♥
CAN I USE THE PUMP NEXT?
WANNA USE A FLOATY, RUI-CHAN?
I'M GOOD.
I THINK I'LL CHECK OUT THE ROCKS OVER THERE.
ROCKS?
WANNA...
COME WITH ME?

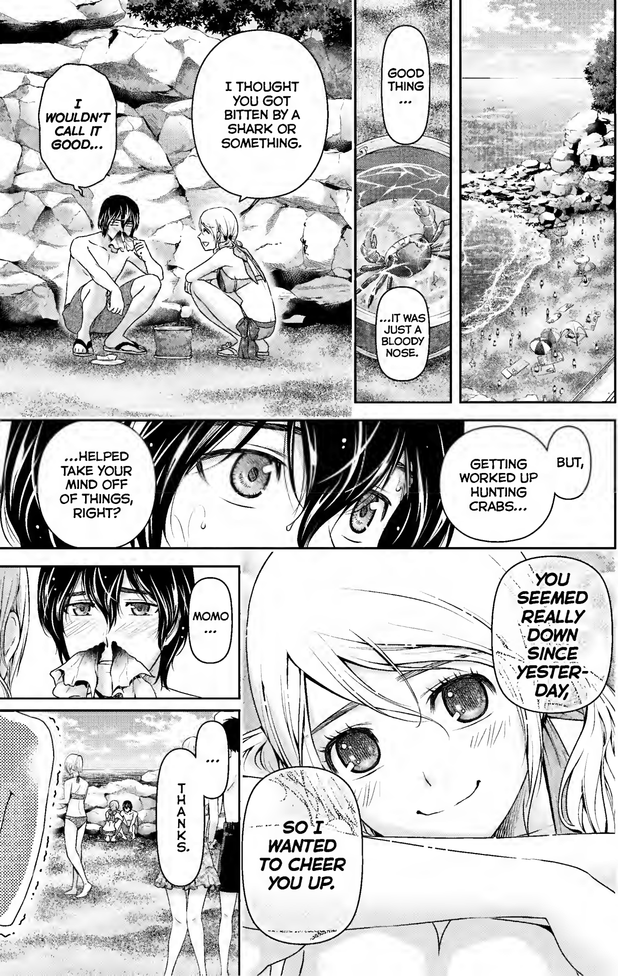

SURE!
JUDGING BY HOW DEPRESSED YOU WERE LAST NIGHT...
...I TAKE IT YOU MET WITH TACHIBANA-SENSEI?
...
YEAH.
SHE PUT AN END TO EVERYTHING.
MEANING?
I HAD A FEELING WHEN SHE DIDN'T SEEM HAPPY TO SEE ME,
THEN WHAT SHE SAID DROVE IT HOME.

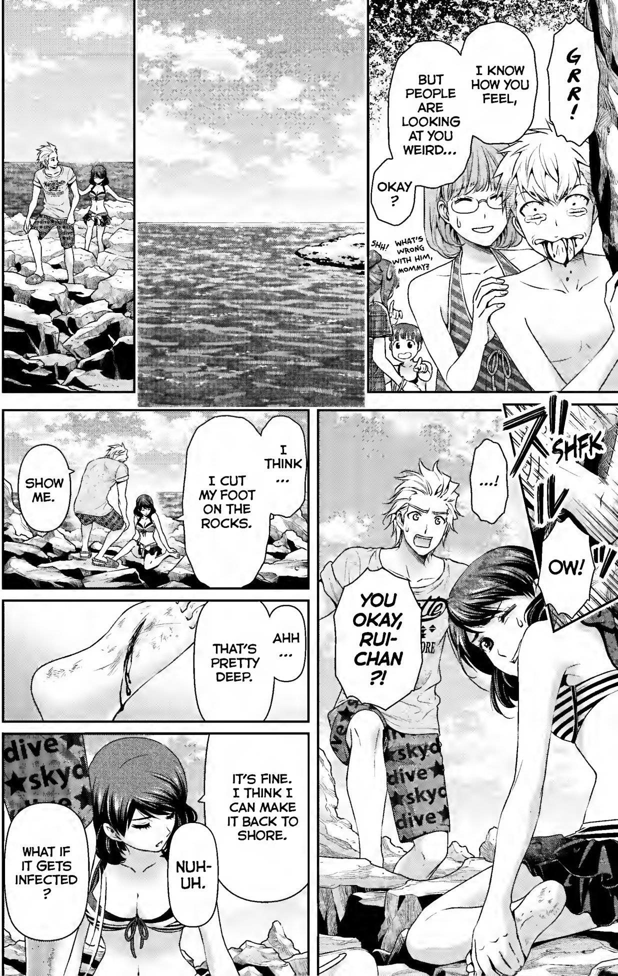

SHE BRUSHED OFF ALL THE NEWS ABOUT MY WRITING EVEN THOUGH SHE CHEERED ME ON BEFORE.
SHE JUST SAID, "WELL, IT'S A GOOD THING WE BROKE UP, THEN."
AND THAT WE'D BE ALL OVER THE TABLOIDS IF OUR RELATIONSHIP GOT OUT.
THAT HER TRANSFERRING WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN ENOUGH TO SOLVE THINGS.
THEN LASTLY, SHE TOLD ME...
SHE HAS NO INTENTION OF GETTING BACK TOGETHER.
IS...
THAT SO?
SKSH
SKSH
C'MON, NATSUO-KUN! WE CAME ALL THE WAY TO THE BEACH! LET'S PLAY!
MIND IF I BORROW NATSUO-KUN, SENSEI?
GO RIGHT AHEAD.
SORRY, I'M NOT REALLY IN THE MOOD...
AWW.

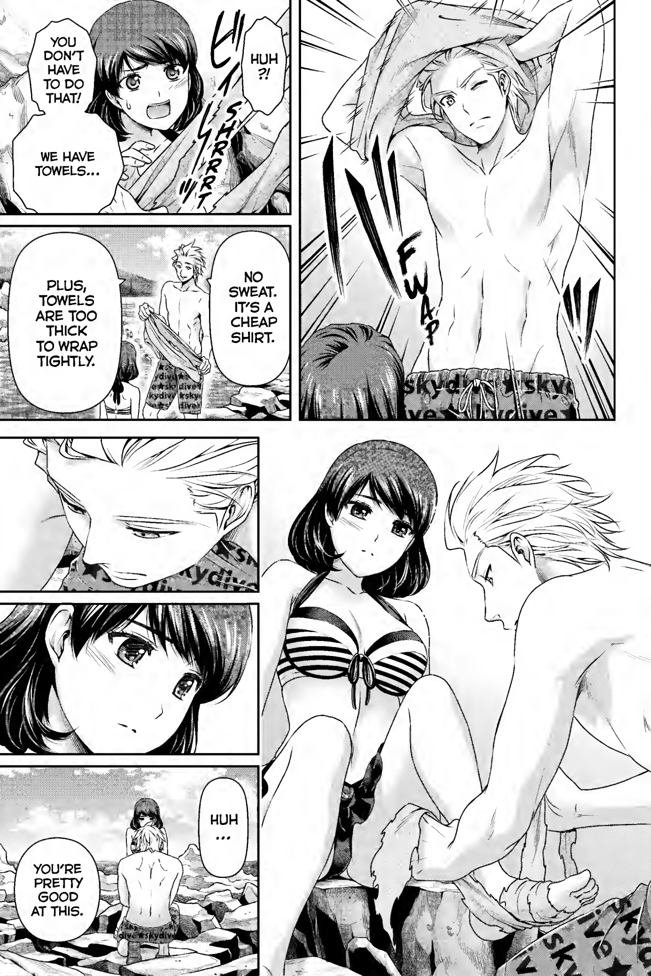

DON'T SAY THAT. GO ENJOY YOURSELF.
IT'S NOT EVERY DAY YOU GET TO COME TO AN ISLAND LIKE THIS.
YEAH!
I UNDERSTAND WHAT SHE'S TRYING TO DO,
BUT IT'S VERY TROUBLING...
OH!
THERE, THERE!
IT'S IN THE BACK. SEE?
HUH?
IT RAN THAT WAY.

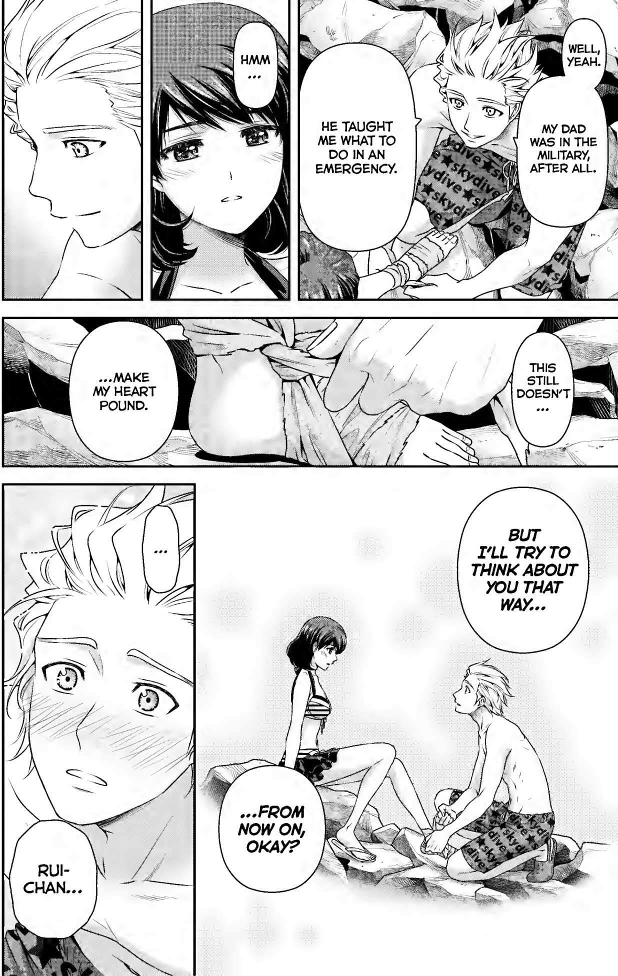

WHY ARE WE CATCHING CRABS, ANYWAY?
'CUZ IT'S FUN!
WE COULD SWIM, BUT THE ROCKS HERE ARE REALLY NEAT.
WELL,
I GUESS IT'S FUN, BUT...
AH.
FIND ONE?
YEAH.
BUT IT'S HIDING IN THE BACK.
THAT'S WHERE THE CHOPSTICKS COME IN!
OH...
OKAY.
HRR.
THIS IS TOUGH...
C'MON.
C'MON.
C'MON.
GET OUT.
JUST A LITTLE FURTHER...
SKIT
AH!
HERE IT COMES!
HUP!
SKIT
AW'RIGHT! GOT ONE!
NICE ONE, NATSUO-KU-
SKFF
WOOO! QUEST COMPLETE! ♥
AH...
HUH?
UH-OH.
MOMO!

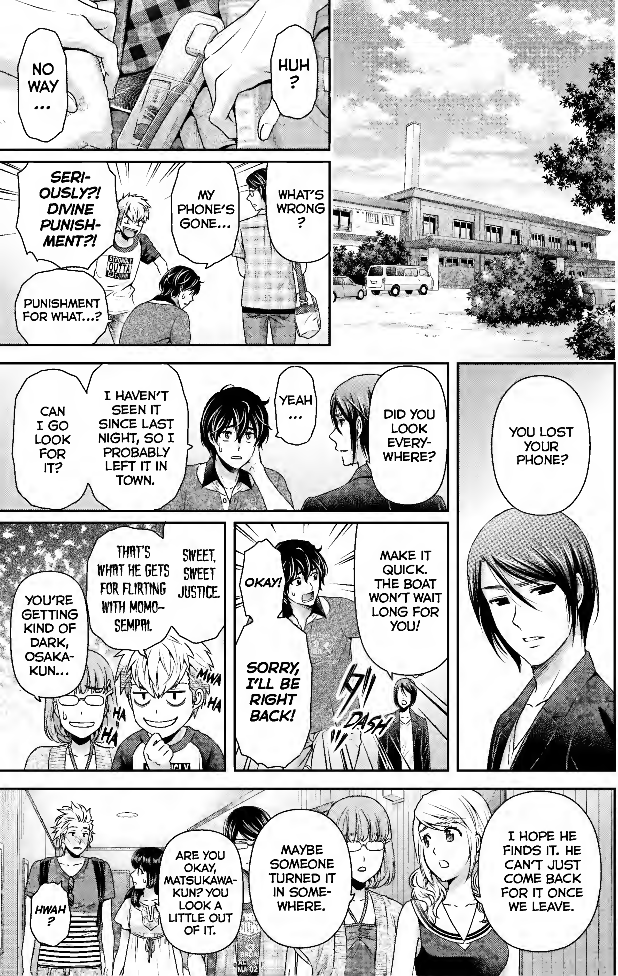

AAAAH!
!
ゴポッ…
BLUB
ゴブフォッ
BLRBRBR
BWAH!
ザッ
SPSH
ARE YOU OKAY, NATSUO-KUN?!
NA-
NATSUO-KUN?!

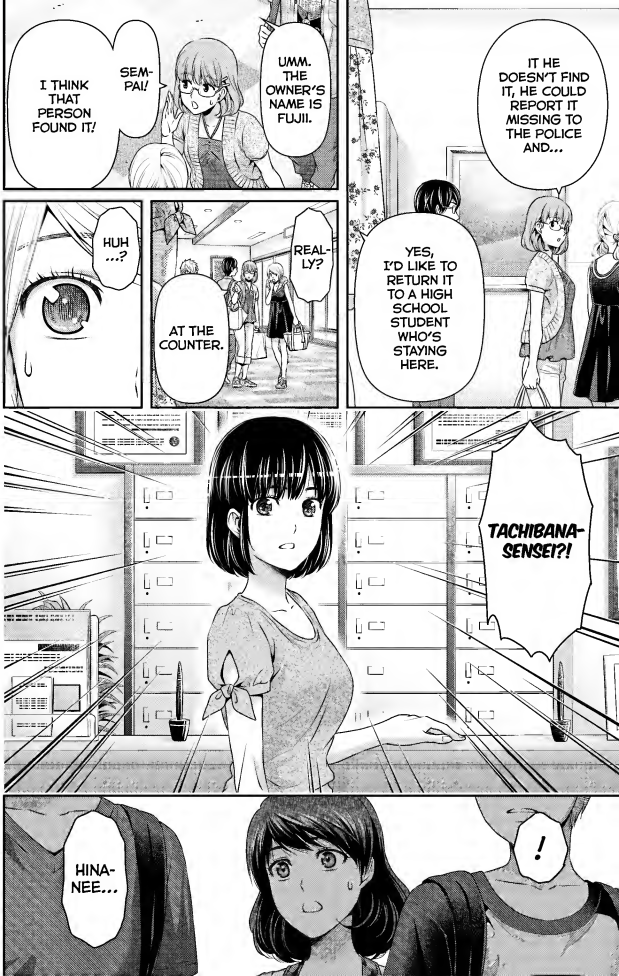

GOOD THING...
...IT WAS JUST A BLOODY NOSE.
I THOUGHT YOU GOT BITTEN BY A SHARK OR SOMETHING.
I WOULDN'T CALL IT GOOD...
BUT,
GETTING WORKED UP HUNTING CRABS...
...HELPED TAKE YOUR MIND OFF OF THINGS, RIGHT?
YOU SEEMED REALLY DOWN SINCE YESTERDAY,
SO I WANTED TO CHEER YOU UP.
MOMO...
...
THANKS.


GRR!
I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL,
BUT PEOPLE ARE LOOKING AT YOU WEIRD...
OKAY?
WHAT'S WRONG WITH HIM, MOMMY?
SHH!
...!
SHFK
OW!
YOU OKAY, RUI-CHAN?!
I THINK...
I CUT MY FOOT ON THE ROCKS.
SHOW ME.
AHH...
THAT'S PRETTY DEEP.
IT'S FINE. I THINK I CAN MAKE IT BACK TO SHORE.
NUH-UH.
WHAT IF IT GETS INFECTED?

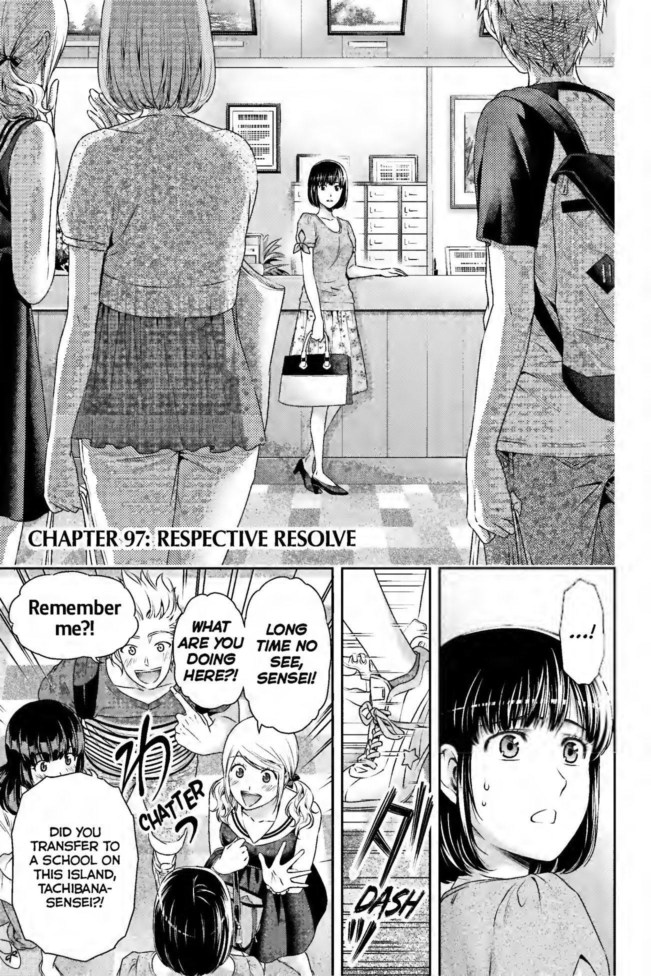

FWAP
HUH ?!
ビリ
SHRRRT
YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO THAT!
WE HAVE TOWELS...
NO SWEAT. IT'S A CHEAP SHIRT.
PLUS, TOWELS ARE TOO THICK TO WRAP TIGHTLY.
HUH ...
YOU'RE PRETTY GOOD AT THIS.

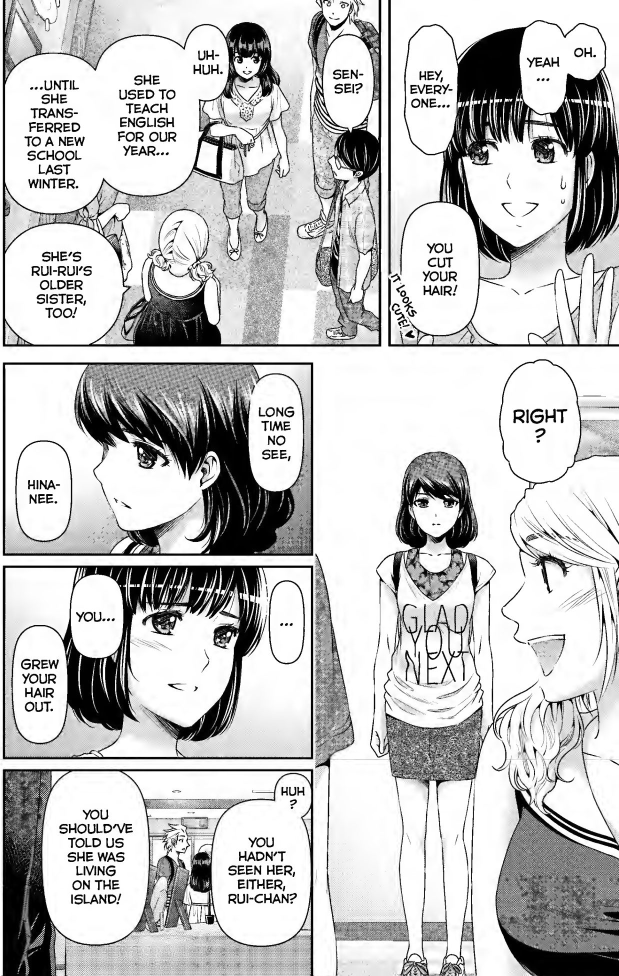

WELL, YEAH.
MY DAD WAS IN THE MILITARY, AFTER ALL.
HE TAUGHT ME WHAT TO DO IN AN EMERGENCY.
HMM ...
THIS STILL DOESN'T ...
...MAKE MY HEART POUND.
BUT I'LL TRY TO THINK ABOUT YOU THAT WAY...
...FROM NOW ON, OKAY?
...
RUI-CHAN...

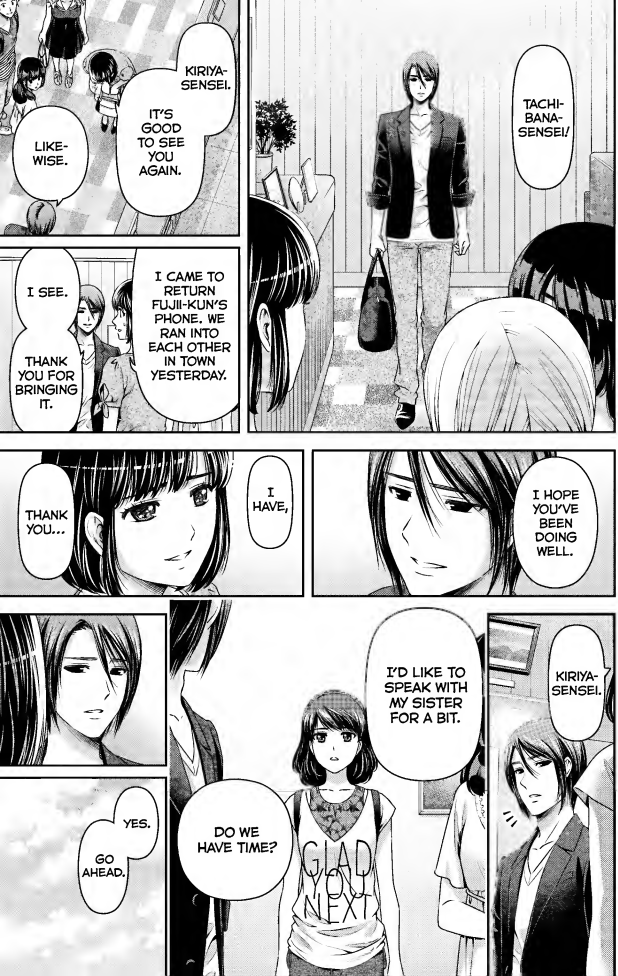

HUH?
NO WAY...
WHAT'S WRONG?
MY PHONE'S GONE...
SERIOUSLY?! DIVINE PUNISHMENT?!
STRONGLY OUTTA
PUNISHMENT FOR WHAT...?
YOU LOST YOUR PHONE?
DID YOU LOOK EVERYWHERE?
YEAH...
I HAVEN'T SEEN IT SINCE LAST NIGHT, SO I PROBABLY LEFT IT IN TOWN.
CAN I GO LOOK FOR IT?
MAKE IT QUICK. THE BOAT WON'T WAIT LONG FOR YOU!
OKAY!
SORRY, I'LL BE RIGHT BACK!
DASH
SWEET, SWEET JUSTICE.
THAT'S WHAT HE GETS FOR FLIRTING WITH MOMO-SEMPAI.
MWA HA
YOU'RE GETTING KIND OF DARK, OSAKA-KUN...
HA HA
I HOPE HE FINDS IT. HE CAN'T JUST COME BACK FOR IT ONCE WE LEAVE.
MAYBE SOMEONE TURNED IT IN SOMEWHERE.
ARE YOU OKAY, MATSUKAWA-KUN? YOU LOOK A LITTLE OUT OF IT.
HWAH?

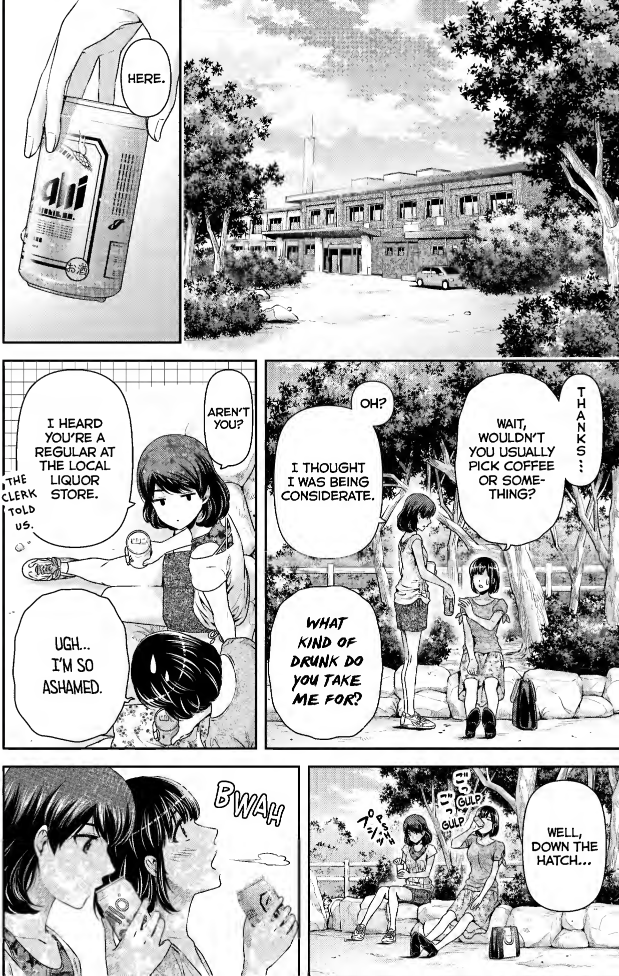

IT HE DOESN'T FIND IT, HE COULD REPORT IT MISSING TO THE POLICE AND...
YES, I'D LIKE TO RETURN IT TO A HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT WHO'S STAYING HERE.
UMM. THE OWNER'S NAME IS FUJII.
SEMPAI!
I THINK THAT PERSON FOUND IT!
REALLY?
AT THE COUNTER.
HUH...?
TACHIBANA-SENSEI?!
!
HINA-NEE...

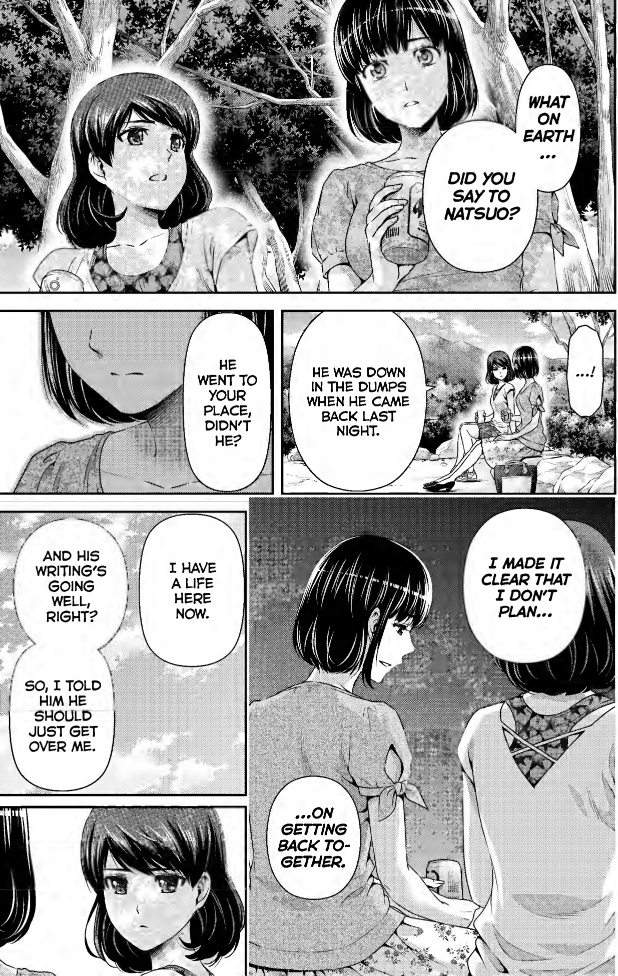
CHAPTER 97: RESPECTIVE RESOLVE

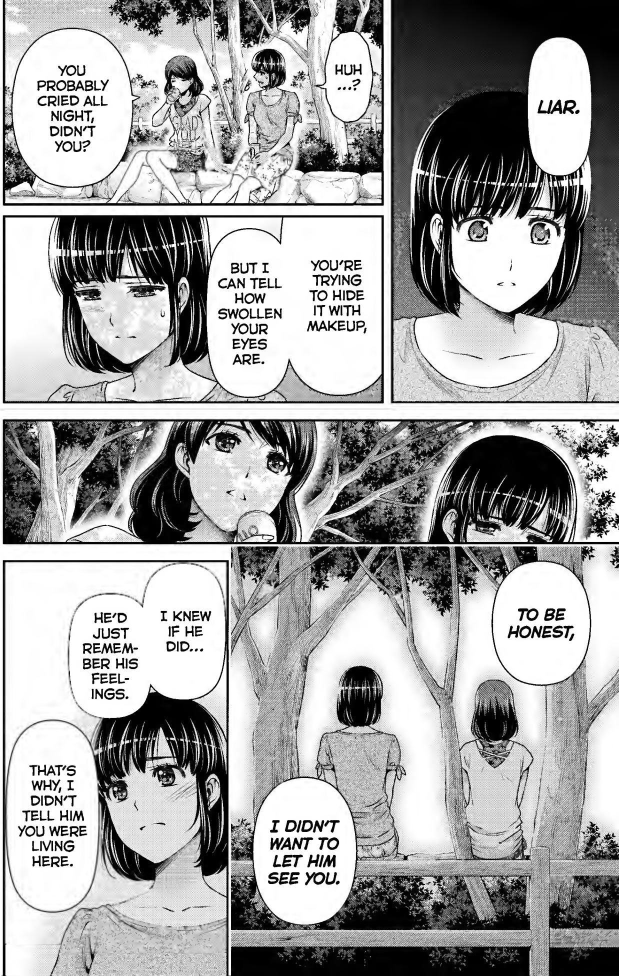

...!
DASH
LONG TIME NO SEE, SENSEI!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?!
Remember me?!
CHATTER
DID YOU TRANSFER TO A SCHOOL ON THIS ISLAND, TACHIBANA-SENSEI?!

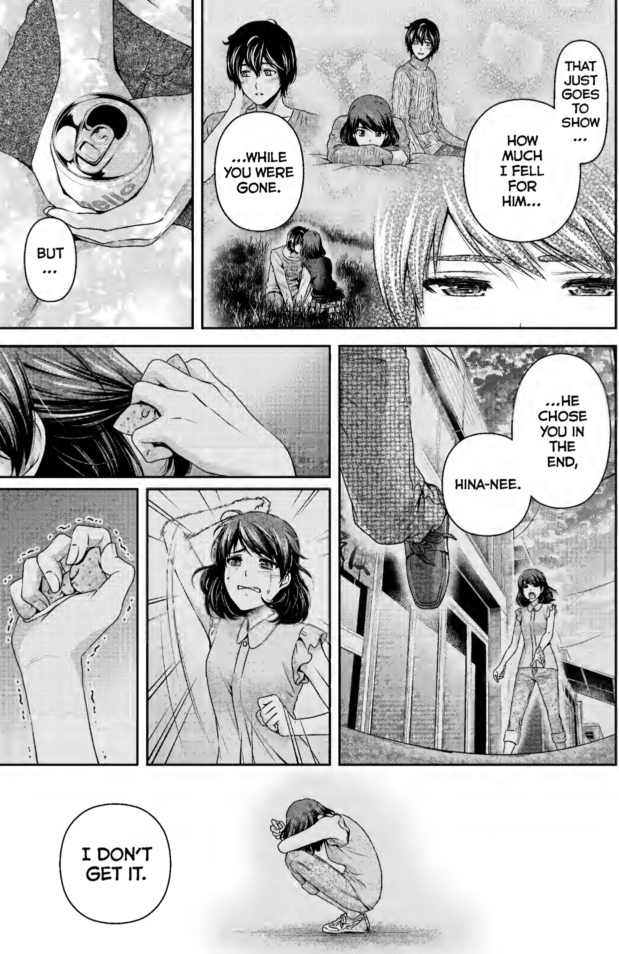

OH.
YEAH...
HEY, EVERYONE...
YOU CUT YOUR HAIR!
IT LOOKS CUTE! ♥
SENSEI?
UH-HUH.
SHE USED TO TEACH ENGLISH FOR OUR YEAR...
...UNTIL SHE TRANSFERRED TO A NEW SCHOOL LAST WINTER.
SHE'S RUI-RUI'S OLDER SISTER, TOO!
RIGHT?
GLAD YOU NEXT
LONG TIME NO SEE,
HINA-NEE.
...
YOU...
GREW YOUR HAIR OUT.
HUH?
YOU HADN'T SEEN HER, EITHER, RUI-CHAN?
YOU SHOULD'VE TOLD US SHE WAS LIVING ON THE ISLAND!

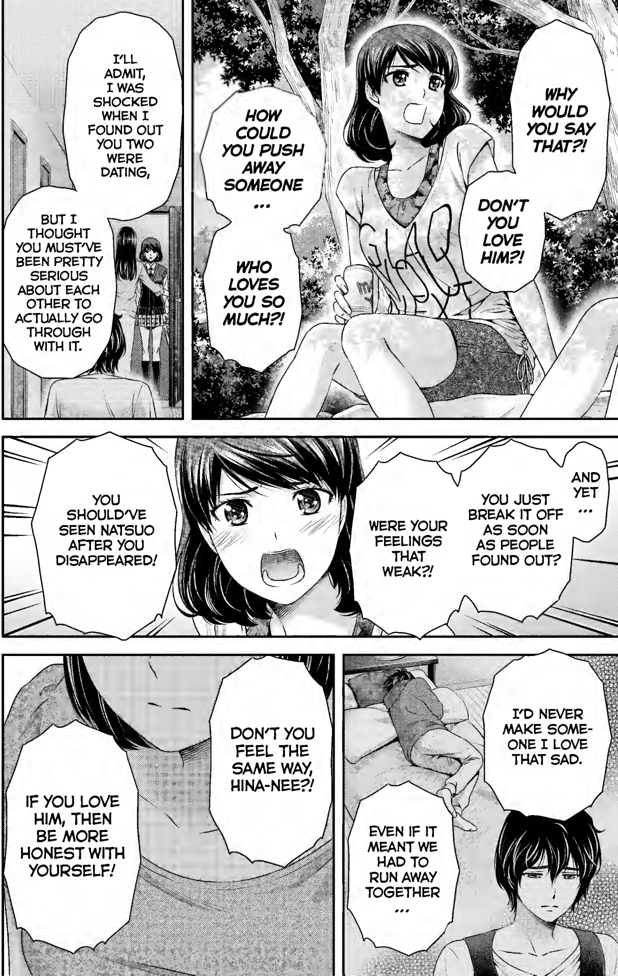

TACHIBANA-SENSEI!
KIRIYA-SENSEI.
IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN.
LIKEWISE.
I CAME TO RETURN FUJII-KUN'S PHONE. WE RAN INTO EACH OTHER IN TOWN YESTERDAY.
I SEE.
THANK YOU FOR BRINGING IT.
I HOPE YOU'VE BEEN DOING WELL.
I HAVE,
THANK YOU...
KIRIYA-SENSEI.
I'D LIKE TO SPEAK WITH MY SISTER FOR A BIT.
DO WE HAVE TIME?
GLAD YOU NEXT
YES.
GO AHEAD.

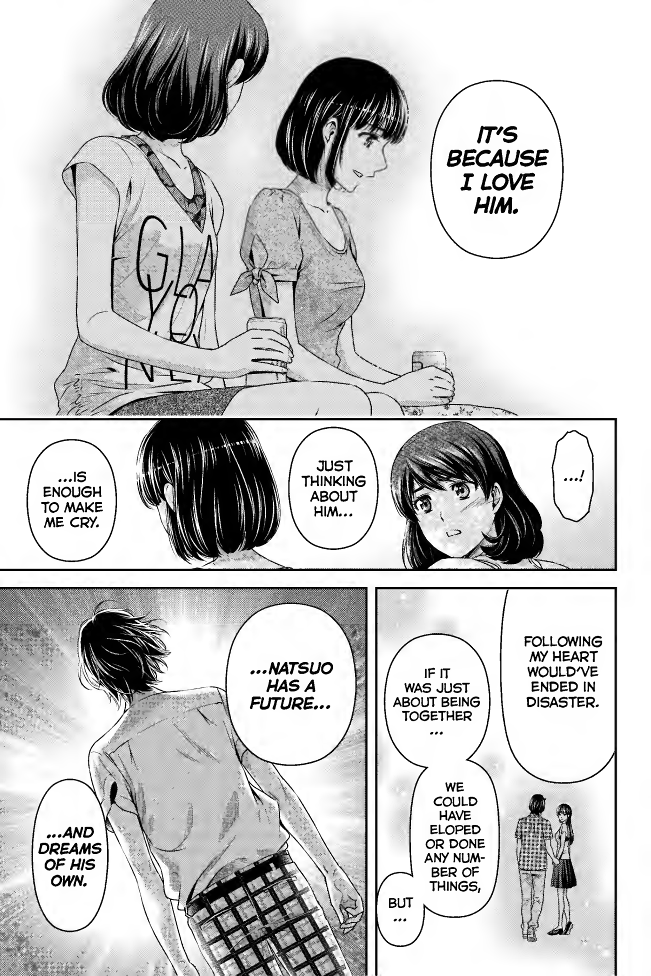

HERE.
お酒
THANKS...
WAIT, WOULDN'T YOU USUALLY PICK COFFEE OR SOME-THING?
OH?
I THOUGHT I WAS BEING CONSIDERATE.
WHAT KIND OF DRUNK DO YOU TAKE ME FOR?
AREN'T YOU?
I HEARD YOU'RE A REGULAR AT THE LOCAL LIQUOR STORE.
THE CLERK TOLD US.
UGH.. I'M SO ASHAMED.
WELL, DOWN THE HATCH...
ごっ GULP
ごっ GULP
プシッ PSSHH
BWAH

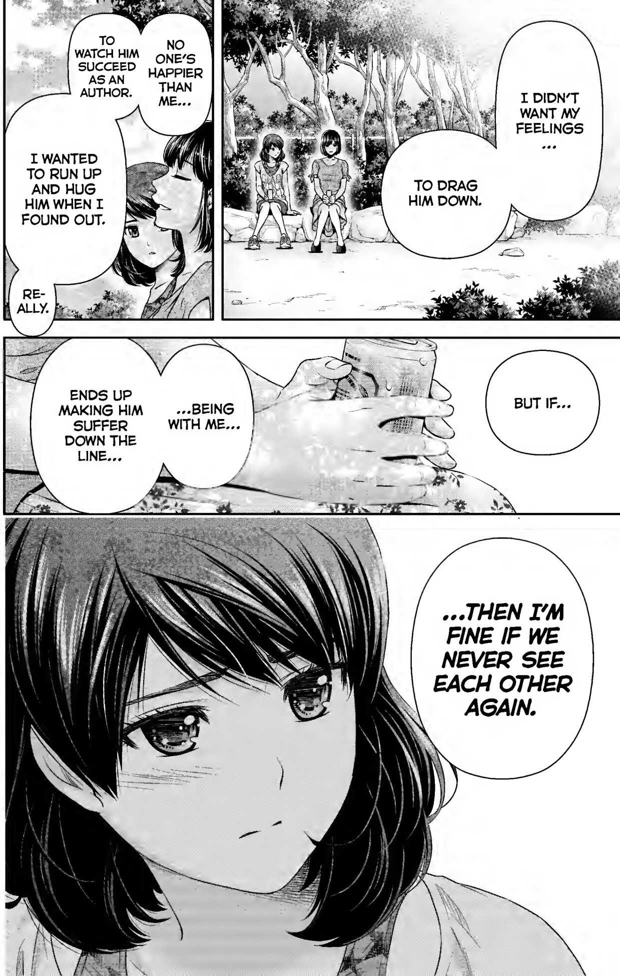

WHAT ON EARTH...
DID YOU SAY TO NATSUO?
...!
HE WAS DOWN IN THE DUMPS WHEN HE CAME BACK LAST NIGHT.
HE WENT TO YOUR PLACE, DIDN'T HE?
I MADE IT CLEAR THAT I DON'T PLAN...
...ON GETTING BACK TO-GETHER.
I HAVE A LIFE HERE NOW.
AND HIS WRITING'S GOING WELL, RIGHT?
SO, I TOLD HIM HE SHOULD JUST GET OVER ME.

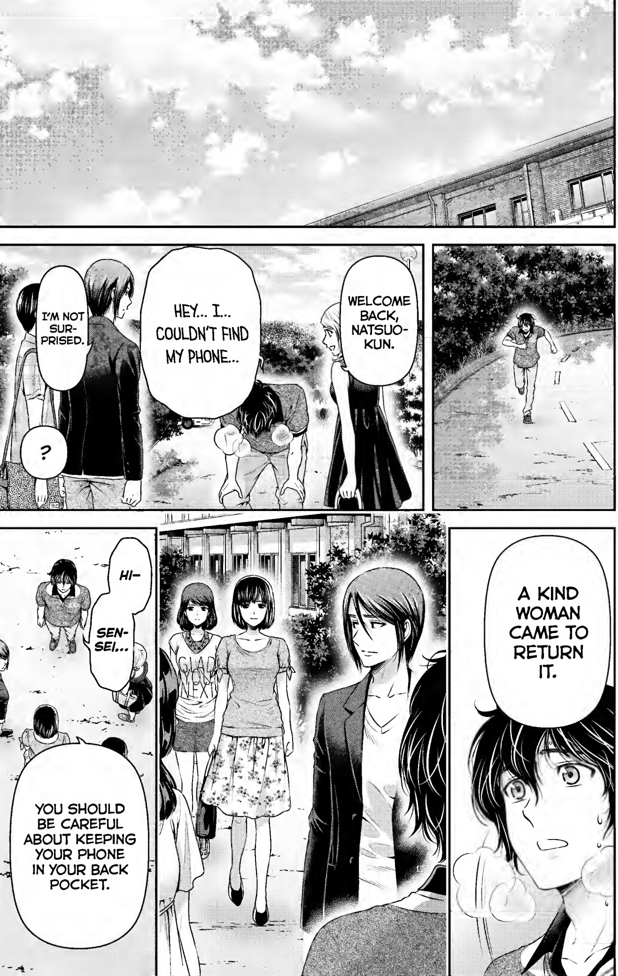

LIAR.
HUH ...?
YOU PROBABLY CRIED ALL NIGHT, DIDN'T YOU?
YOU'RE TRYING TO HIDE IT WITH MAKEUP,
BUT I CAN TELL HOW SWOLLEN YOUR EYES ARE.
TO BE HONEST,
I DIDN'T WANT TO LET HIM SEE YOU.
I KNEW IF HE DID...
HE'D JUST REMEMBER HIS FEELINGS.
THAT'S WHY, I DIDN'T TELL HIM YOU WERE LIVING HERE.

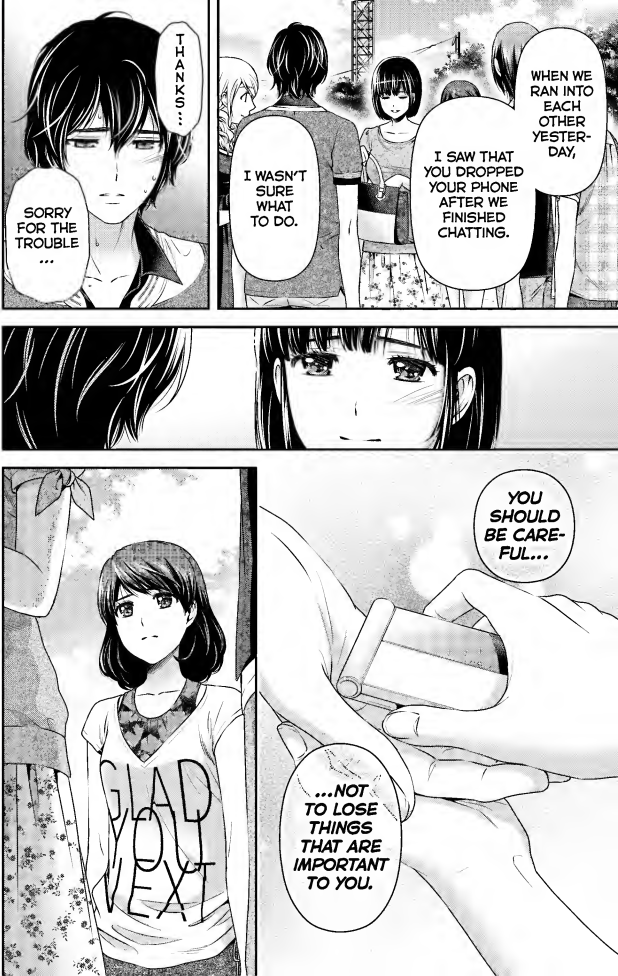

THAT JUST GOES TO SHOW...
HOW MUCH I FELL FOR HIM...
...WHILE YOU WERE GONE.
hello
BUT...
...HE CHOSE YOU IN THE END,
HINA-NEE.
I DON'T GET IT.

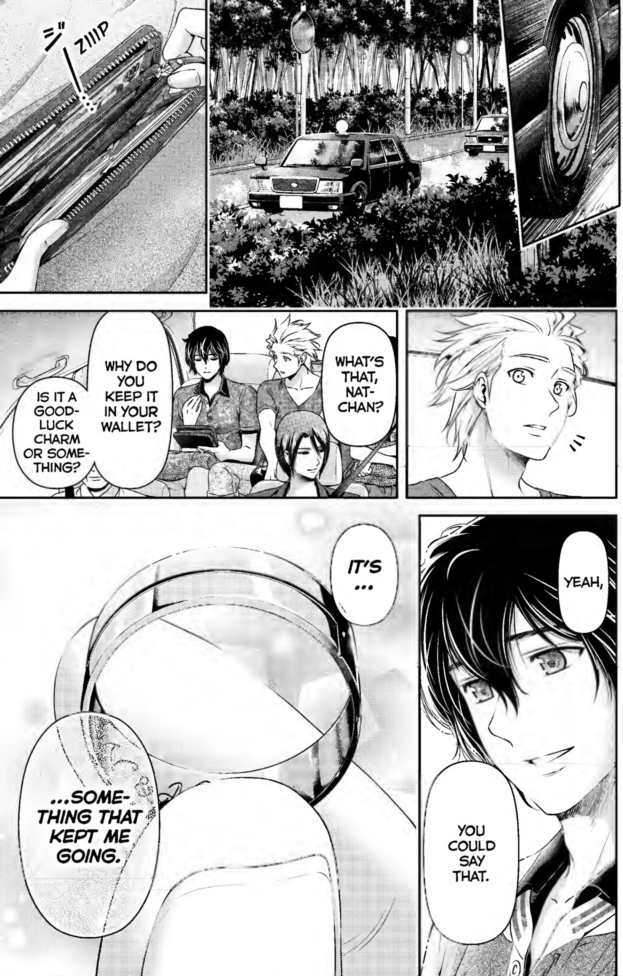

WHY WOULD YOU SAY THAT?!
DON'T YOU LOVE HIM?!
HOW COULD YOU PUSH AWAY SOMEONE ...
WHO LOVES YOU SO MUCH?!
I'LL ADMIT, I WAS SHOCKED WHEN I FOUND OUT YOU TWO WERE DATING,
BUT I THOUGHT YOU MUST'VE BEEN PRETTY SERIOUS ABOUT EACH OTHER TO ACTUALLY GO THROUGH WITH IT.
AND YET ...
YOU JUST BREAK IT OFF AS SOON AS PEOPLE FOUND OUT?
WERE YOUR FEELINGS THAT WEAK?!
YOU SHOULD'VE SEEN NATSUO AFTER YOU DISAPPEARED!
I'D NEVER MAKE SOMEONE I LOVE THAT SAD.
EVEN IF IT MEANT WE HAD TO RUN AWAY TOGETHER ...
DON'T YOU FEEL THE SAME WAY, HINA-NEE?!
IF YOU LOVE HIM, THEN BE MORE HONEST WITH YOURSELF!

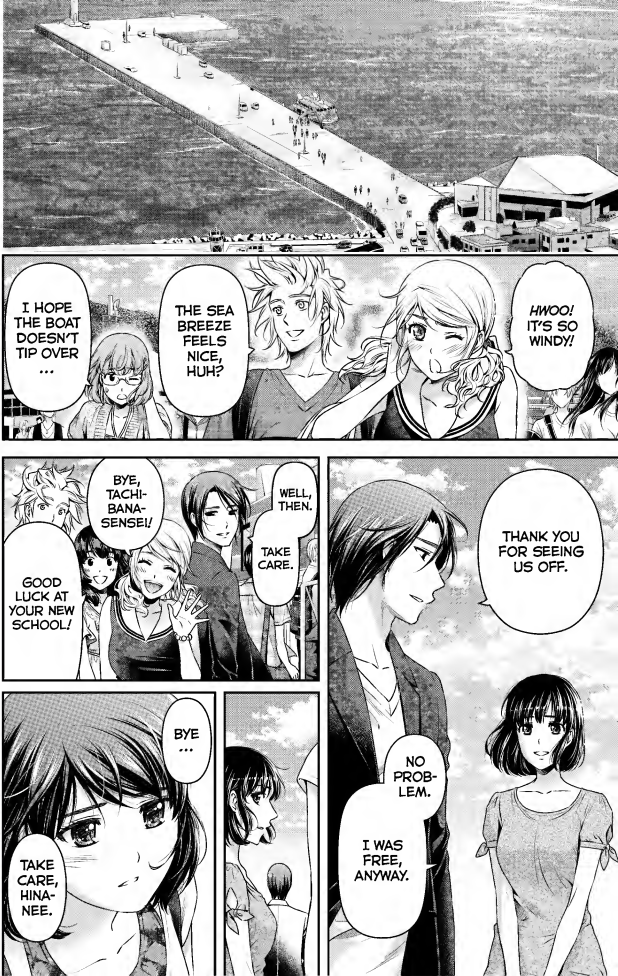

IT'S BECAUSE I LOVE HIM.
...!
JUST THINKING ABOUT HIM...
...IS ENOUGH TO MAKE ME CRY.
FOLLOWING MY HEART WOULD'VE ENDED IN DISASTER.
IF IT WAS JUST ABOUT BEING TOGETHER...
WE COULD HAVE ELOPED OR DONE ANY NUMBER OF THINGS,
BUT...
...NATSUO HAS A FUTURE...
...AND DREAMS OF HIS OWN.

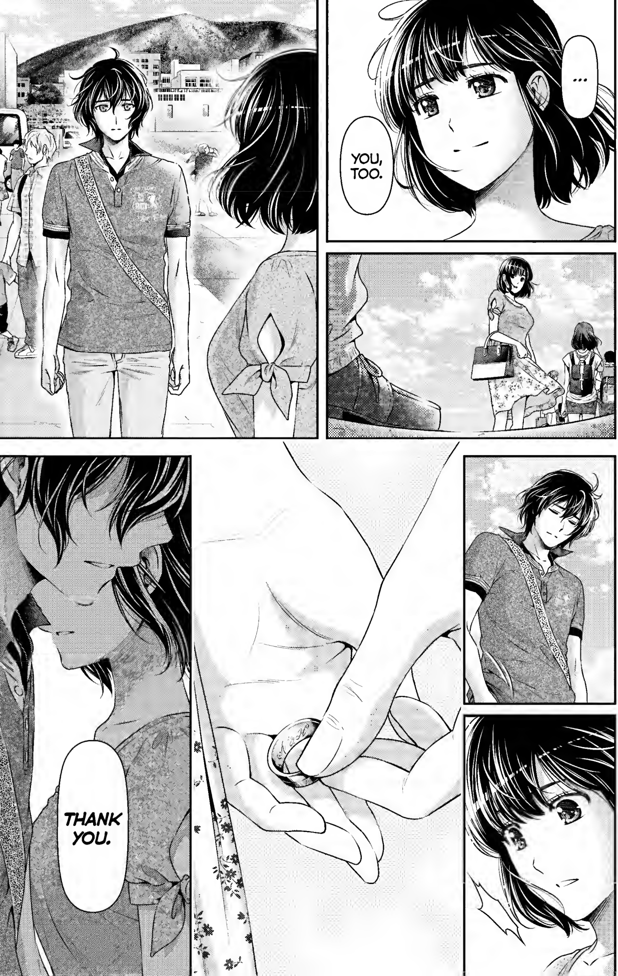

I DIDN'T WANT MY FEELINGS...
TO DRAG HIM DOWN.
NO ONE'S HAPPIER THAN ME...
TO WATCH HIM SUCCEED AS AN AUTHOR.
I WANTED TO RUN UP AND HUG HIM WHEN I FOUND OUT.
REALLY.
BUT IF...
...BEING WITH ME...
ENDS UP MAKING HIM SUFFER DOWN THE LINE...
...THEN I'M FINE IF WE NEVER SEE EACH OTHER AGAIN.

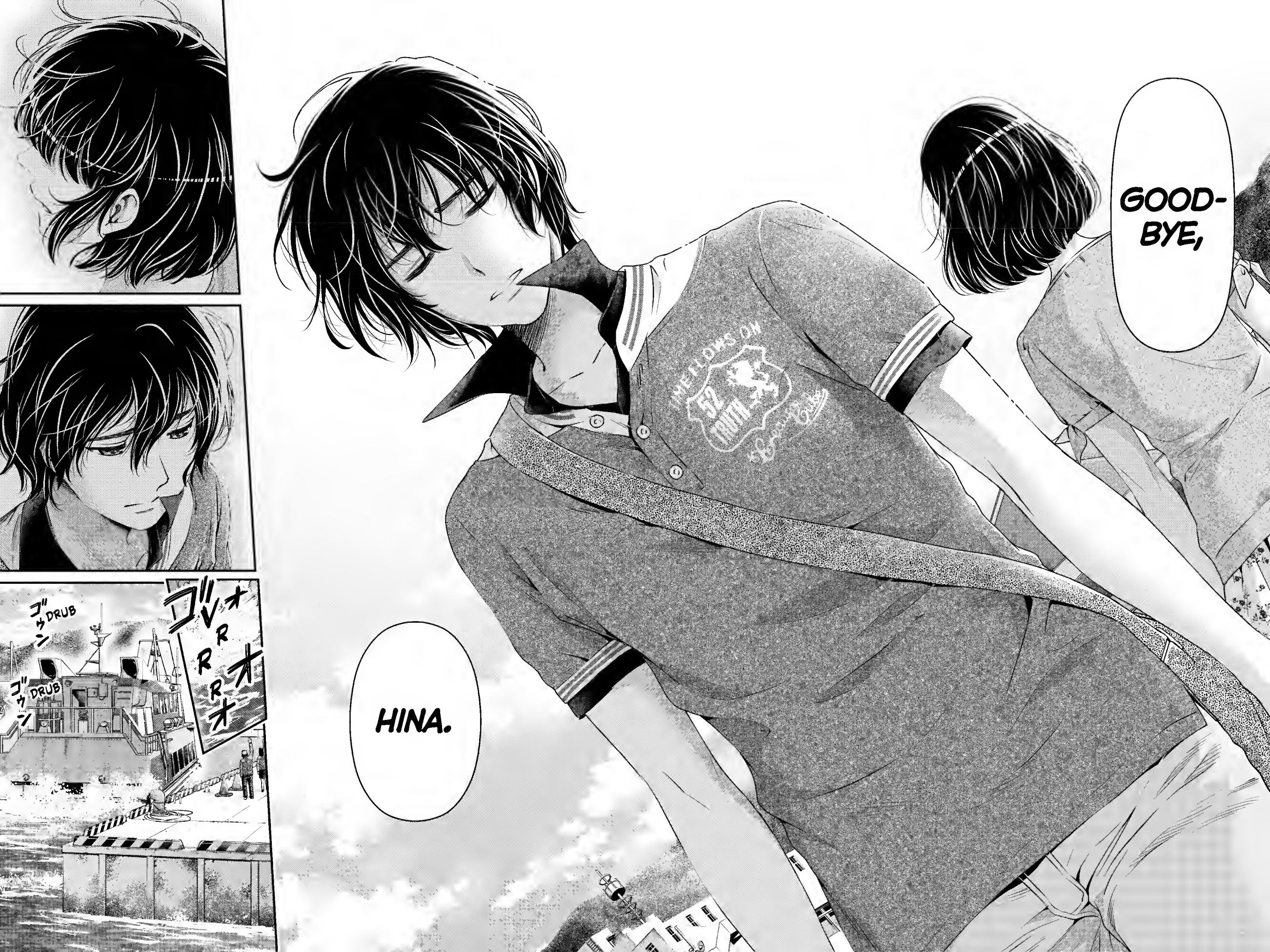

WELCOME BACK, NATSUO-KUN.
HEY... I... COULDN'T FIND MY PHONE...
I'M NOT SURPRISED.
?
A KIND WOMAN CAME TO RETURN IT.
GLAD YOU NEXT
HI- SEN- SEI...
YOU SHOULD BE CAREFUL ABOUT KEEPING YOUR PHONE IN YOUR BACK POCKET.

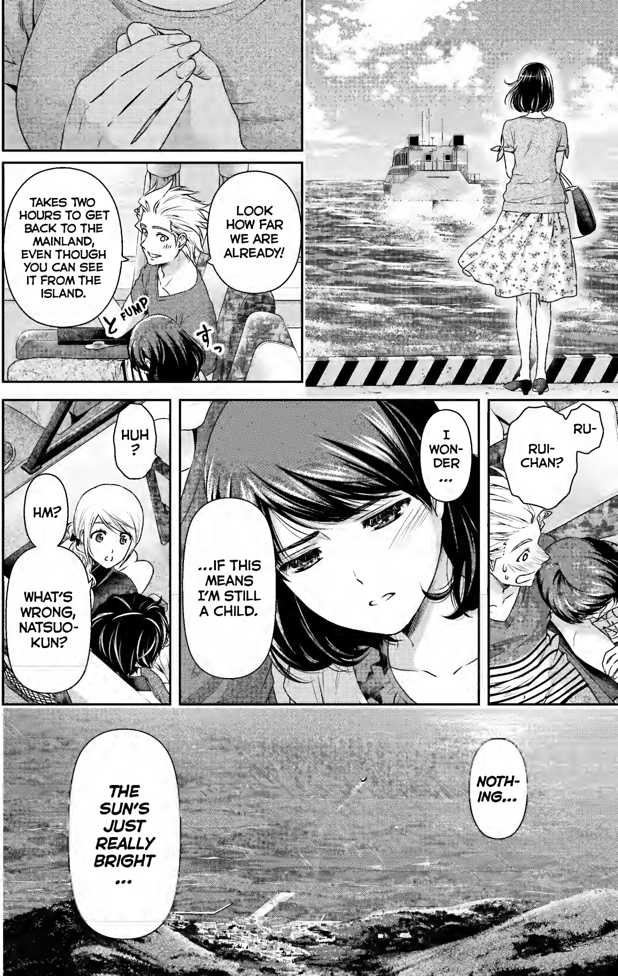

WHEN WE RAN INTO EACH OTHER YESTERDAY,
I SAW THAT YOU DROPPED YOUR PHONE AFTER WE FINISHED CHATTING.
I WASN'T SURE WHAT TO DO.
THANKS…
SORRY FOR THE TROUBLE…
YOU SHOULD BE CAREFUL…
…NOT TO LOSE THINGS THAT ARE IMPORTANT TO YOU.
GLAD YOU NEXT


ジ
ZIIIP
WHAT'S THAT, NAT-CHAN?
WHY DO YOU KEEP IT IN YOUR WALLET?
IS IT A GOOD-LUCK CHARM OR SOMETHING?
YEAH,
YOU COULD SAY THAT.
IT'S...
...SOMETHING THAT KEPT ME GOING.

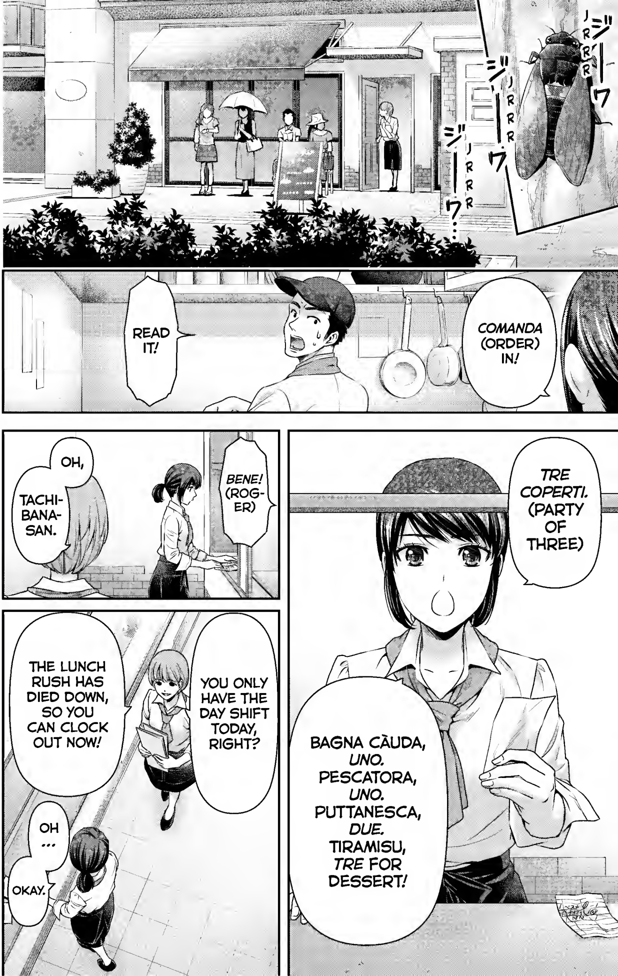

HWOO! IT'S SO WINDY!
THE SEA BREEZE FEELS NICE, HUH?
I HOPE THE BOAT DOESN'T TIP OVER ...
THANK YOU FOR SEEING US OFF.
NO PROBLEM.
I WAS FREE, ANYWAY.
WELL, THEN.
TAKE CARE.
BYE, TACHIBANA-SENSEI!
GOOD LUCK AT YOUR NEW SCHOOL!
BYE ...
TAKE CARE, HINA-NEE.

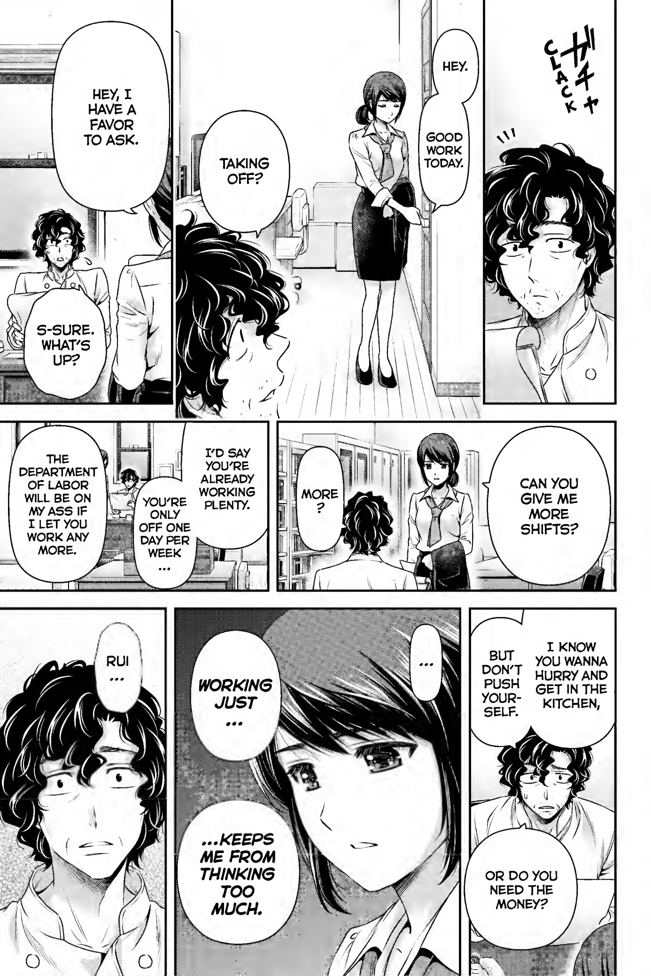

...
YOU, TOO.
THANK YOU.

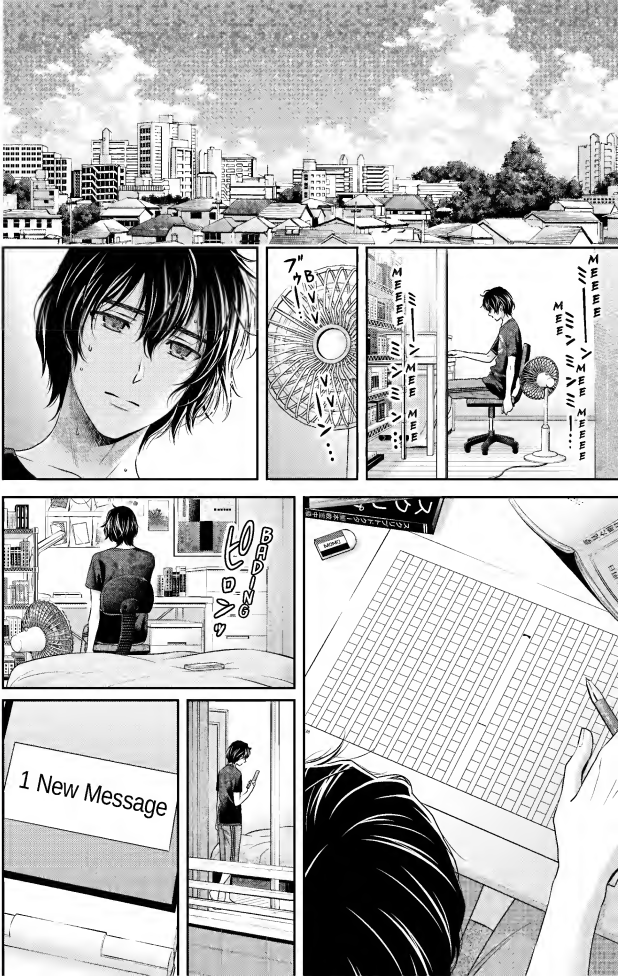

GOOD-BYE,
HINA.
ゴォ VRRR オオ
ゴウン DRUB
ゴウン DRUB

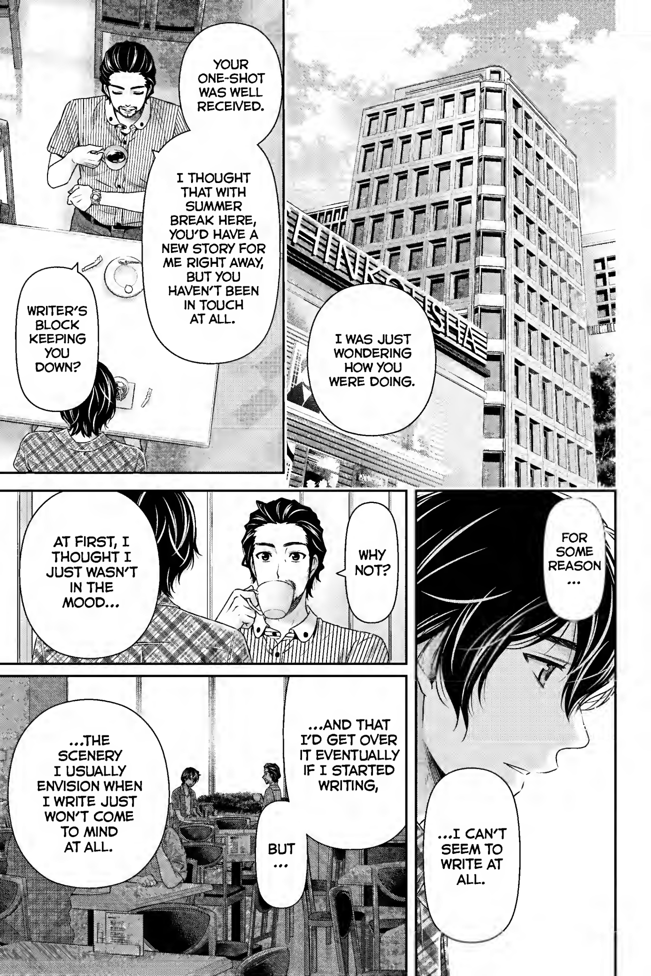

LOOK HOW FAR WE ARE ALREADY!
TAKES TWO HOURS TO GET BACK TO THE MAINLAND, EVEN THOUGH YOU CAN SEE IT FROM THE ISLAND.
と FUMP
すっ
RU- RUI-CHAN?
I WONDER...
...IF THIS MEANS I'M STILL A CHILD.
HUH?
HM?
WHAT'S WRONG, NATSUO-KUN?
NOTHING...
THE SUN'S JUST REALLY BRIGHT...

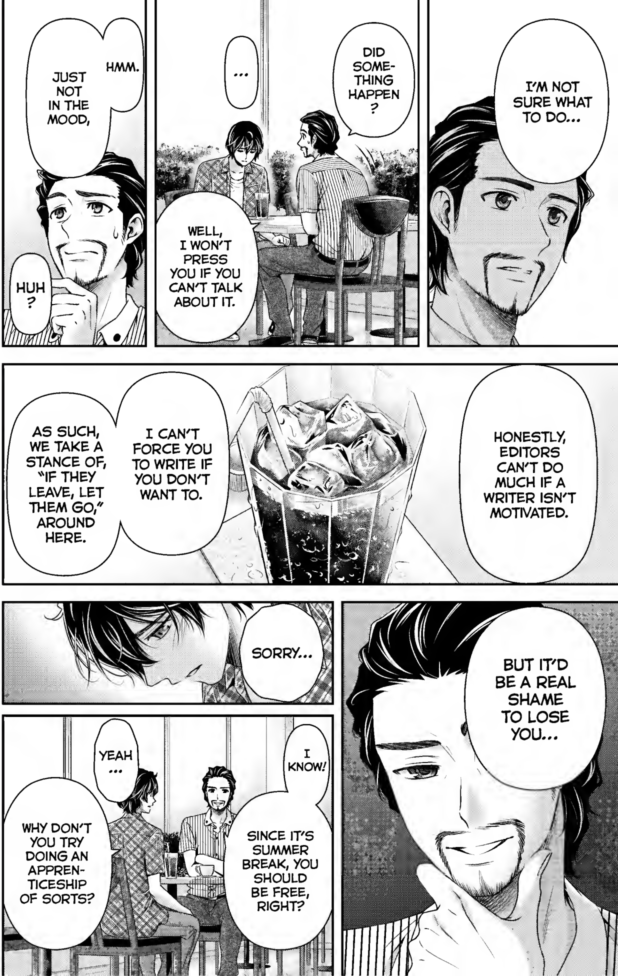
CHAPTER 98: MISTAKE...?

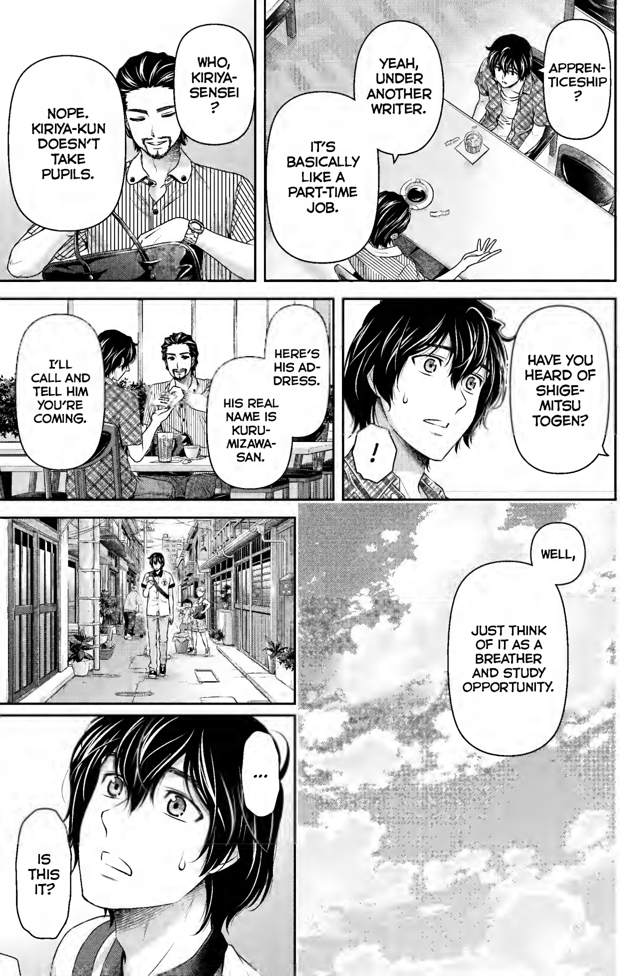

ジーワ JRRR
ジーワ JRRR
ジーワ… JRRR
COMANDA (ORDER) IN!
READ IT!
TRE COPERTI. (PARTY OF THREE)
BAGNA CÀUDA, *UNO.* PESCATORA, *UNO.* PUTTANESCA, *DUE.* TIRAMISU, *TRE* FOR DESSERT!
BENE! (ROGER)
OH, TACHIBANA-SAN.
YOU ONLY HAVE THE DAY SHIFT TODAY, RIGHT?
THE LUNCH RUSH HAS DIED DOWN, SO YOU CAN CLOCK OUT NOW!
OH ...
OKAY.

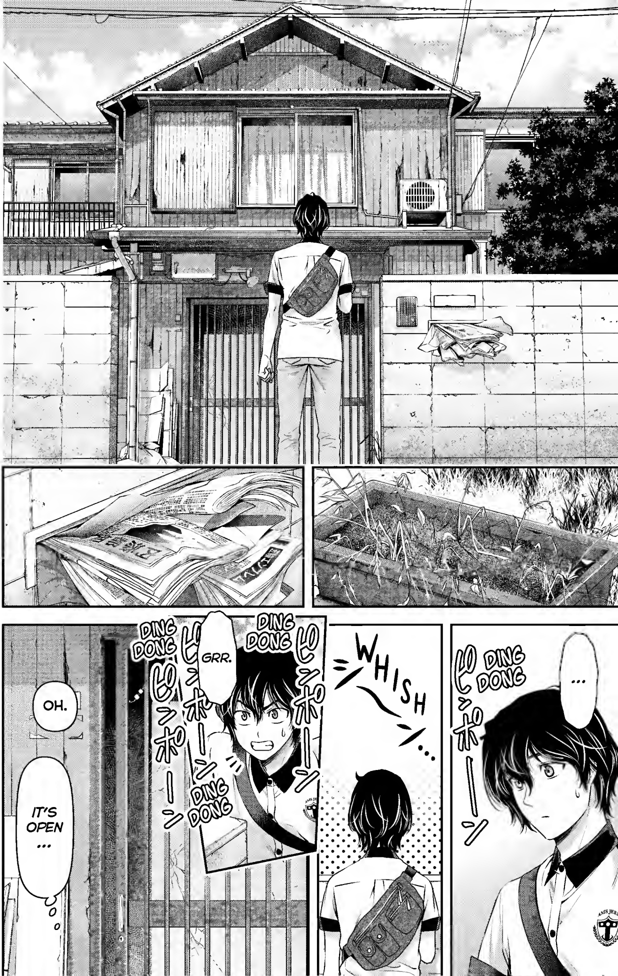

ガチャ
CLACK
HEY.
GOOD WORK TODAY.
TAKING OFF?
HEY, I HAVE A FAVOR TO ASK.
S-SURE. WHAT'S UP?
CAN YOU GIVE ME MORE SHIFTS?
MORE?
I'D SAY YOU'RE ALREADY WORKING PLENTY.
YOU'RE ONLY OFF ONE DAY PER WEEK ...
THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR WILL BE ON MY ASS IF I LET YOU WORK ANY MORE.
I KNOW YOU WANNA HURRY AND GET IN THE KITCHEN,
BUT DON'T PUSH YOURSELF.
OR DO YOU NEED THE MONEY?
...
WORKING JUST ...
...KEEPS ME FROM THINKING TOO MUCH.
RUI ...

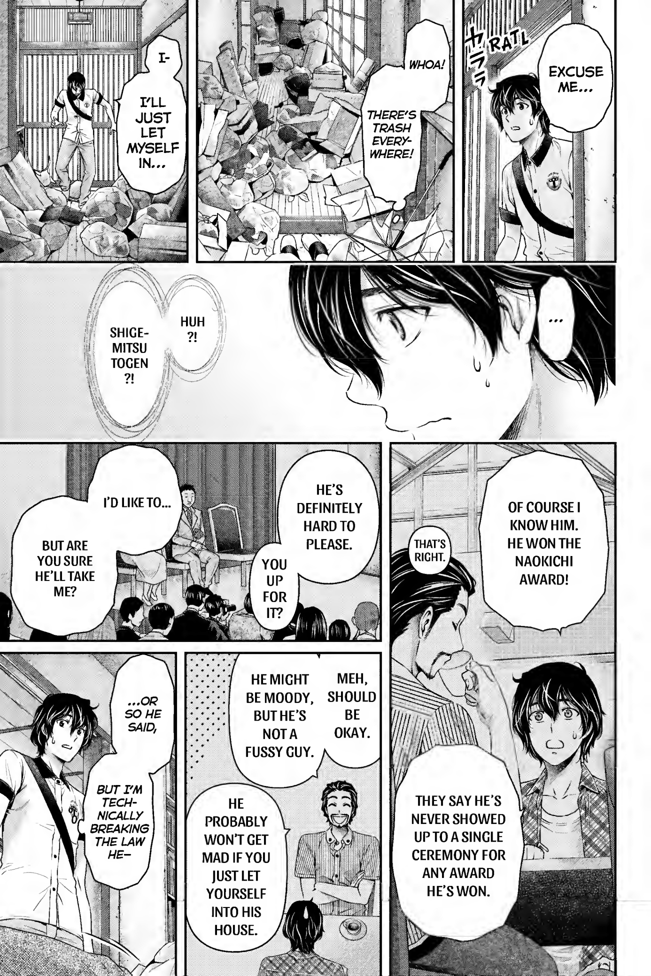

ミーーン MEEEE
ミンミンミー… MEE MEE MEEEE
ミーーン MEEEE
ミンミンミン… MEE MEE
ブゥーー…ン BVVV VVVV…
ピロンッ BADING
MOMO
1 New Message

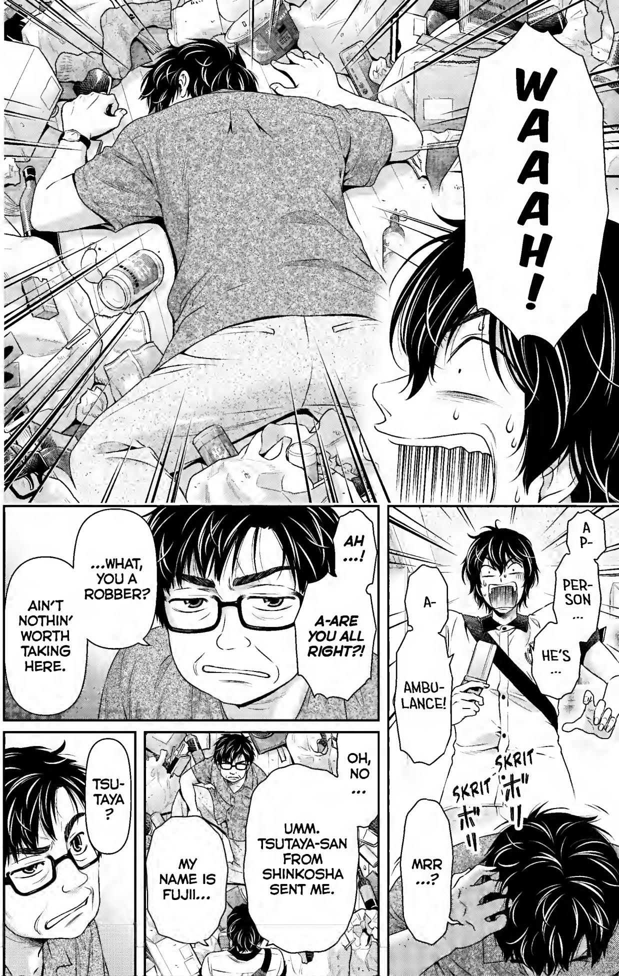

I WAS JUST WONDERING HOW YOU WERE DOING.
YOUR ONE-SHOT WAS WELL RECEIVED.
I THOUGHT THAT WITH SUMMER BREAK HERE, YOU'D HAVE A NEW STORY FOR ME RIGHT AWAY, BUT YOU HAVEN'T BEEN IN TOUCH AT ALL.
WRITER'S BLOCK KEEPING YOU DOWN?
FOR SOME REASON…
…I CAN'T SEEM TO WRITE AT ALL.
WHY NOT?
AT FIRST, I THOUGHT I JUST WASN'T IN THE MOOD…
…AND THAT I'D GET OVER IT EVENTUALLY IF I STARTED WRITING,
BUT…
…THE SCENERY I USUALLY ENVISION WHEN I WRITE JUST WON'T COME TO MIND AT ALL.

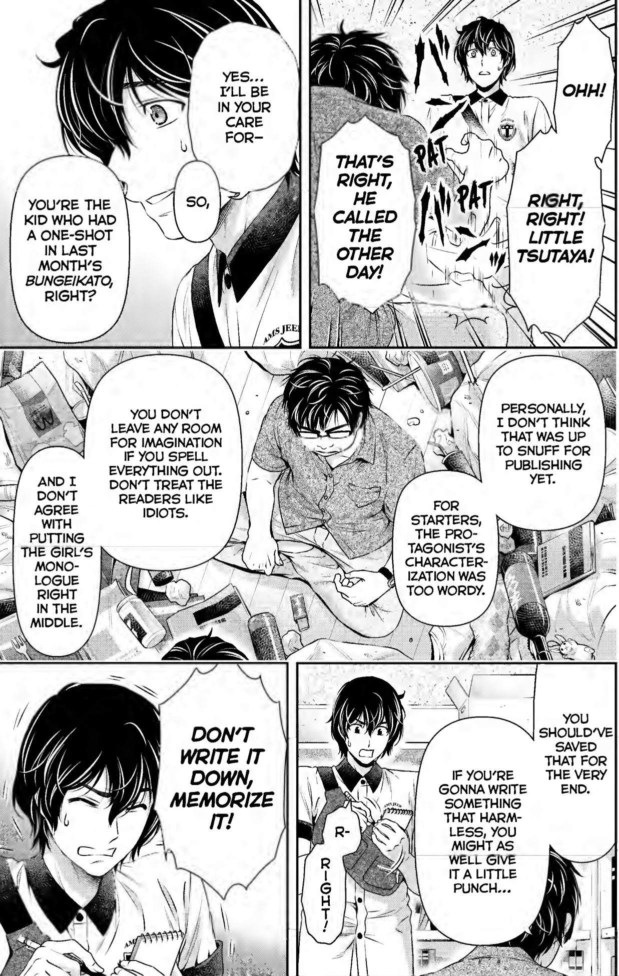

I'M NOT SURE WHAT TO DO...
DID SOMETHING HAPPEN?
...
WELL, I WON'T PRESS YOU IF YOU CAN'T TALK ABOUT IT.
HMM.
JUST NOT IN THE MOOD,
HUH?
HONESTLY, EDITORS CAN'T DO MUCH IF A WRITER ISN'T MOTIVATED.
I CAN'T FORCE YOU TO WRITE IF YOU DON'T WANT TO.
AS SUCH, WE TAKE A STANCE OF, "IF THEY LEAVE, LET THEM GO," AROUND HERE.
BUT IT'D BE A REAL SHAME TO LOSE YOU...
SORRY...
I KNOW!
SINCE IT'S SUMMER BREAK, YOU SHOULD BE FREE, RIGHT?
YEAH...
WHY DON'T YOU TRY DOING AN APPRENTICESHIP OF SORTS?

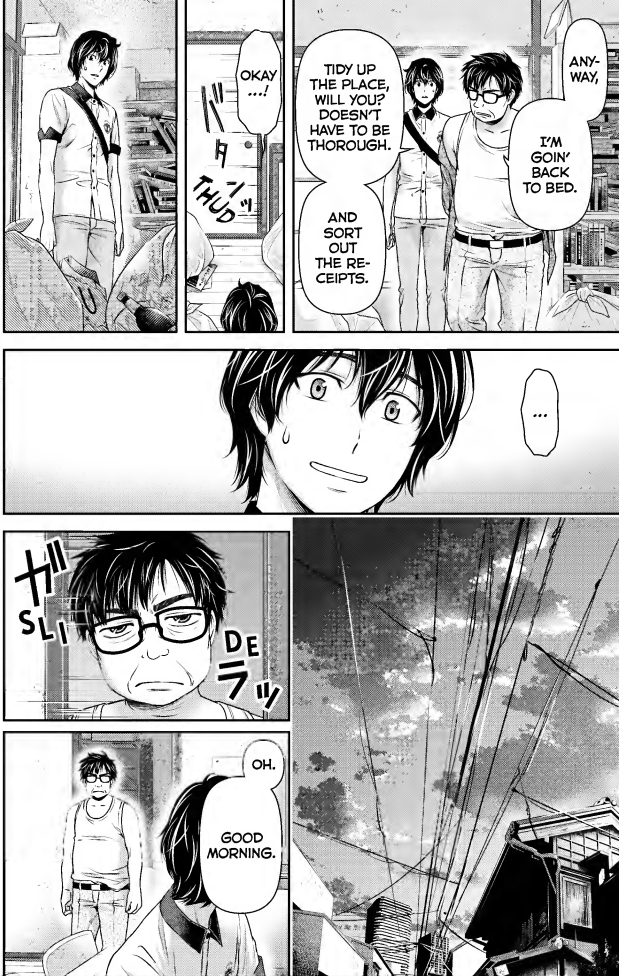

APPRENTICESHIP?
YEAH, UNDER ANOTHER WRITER.
IT'S BASICALLY LIKE A PART-TIME JOB.
WHO, KIRIYA-SENSEI?
NOPE. KIRIYA-KUN DOESN'T TAKE PUPILS.
HAVE YOU HEARD OF SHIGEMITSU TOGEN?
!
HERE'S HIS ADDRESS.
HIS REAL NAME IS KURUMIZAWA-SAN.
I'LL CALL AND TELL HIM YOU'RE COMING.
WELL,
JUST THINK OF IT AS A BREATHER AND STUDY OPPORTUNITY.
...
IS THIS IT?

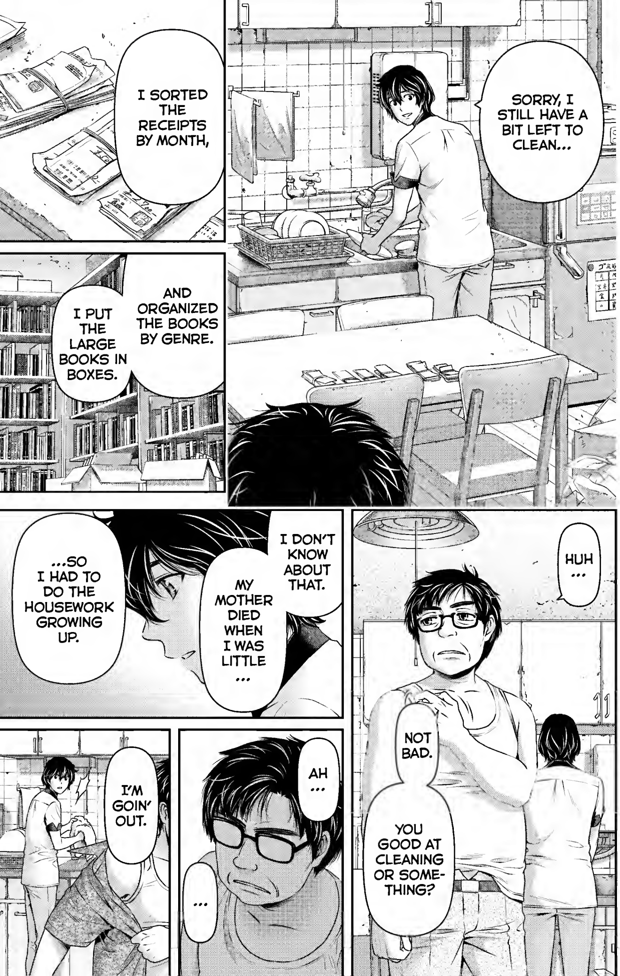

ピンポーン
DING DONG
...
WHISH
...
ピンポーン
DING DONG
GRR.
ピンポーン
DING DONG
ピンポーン
DING DONG
OH.
IT'S OPEN ...

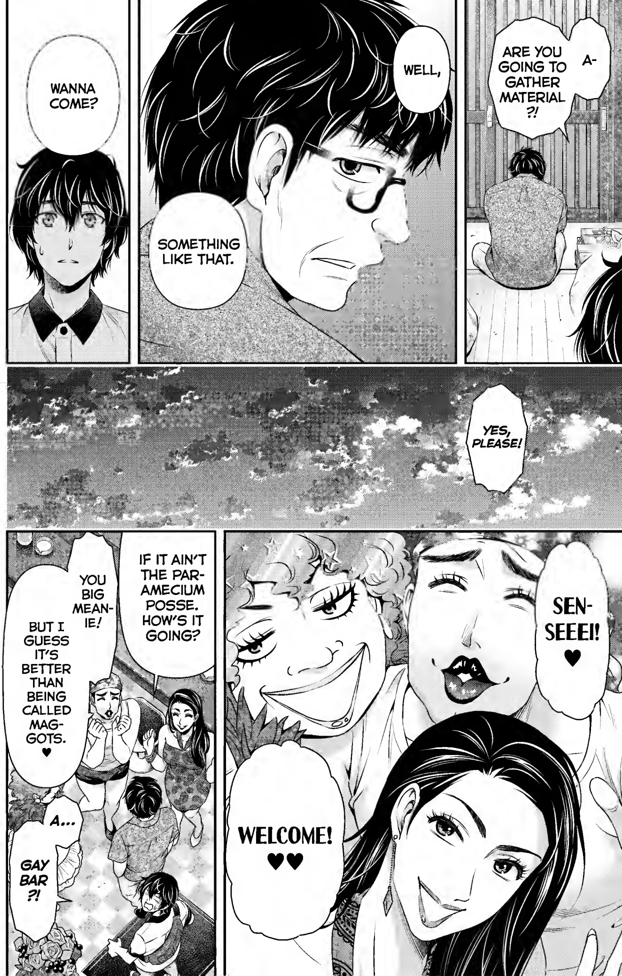

RATL
EXCUSE ME...
WHOA!
THERE'S TRASH EVERYWHERE!
I-
I'LL JUST LET MYSELF IN...
...
HUH ?!
SHIGEMITSU TOGEN ?!
OF COURSE I KNOW HIM. HE WON THE NAOKICHI AWARD!
THAT'S RIGHT.
THEY SAY HE'S NEVER SHOWED UP TO A SINGLE CEREMONY FOR ANY AWARD HE'S WON.
HE'S DEFINITELY HARD TO PLEASE.
YOU UP FOR IT?
I'D LIKE TO...
BUT ARE YOU SURE HE'LL TAKE ME?
MEH, SHOULD BE OKAY.
HE MIGHT BE MOODY, BUT HE'S NOT A FUSSY GUY.
HE PROBABLY WON'T GET MAD IF YOU JUST LET YOURSELF INTO HIS HOUSE.
...OR SO HE SAID,
BUT I'M TECHNICALLY BREAKING THE LAW HE–

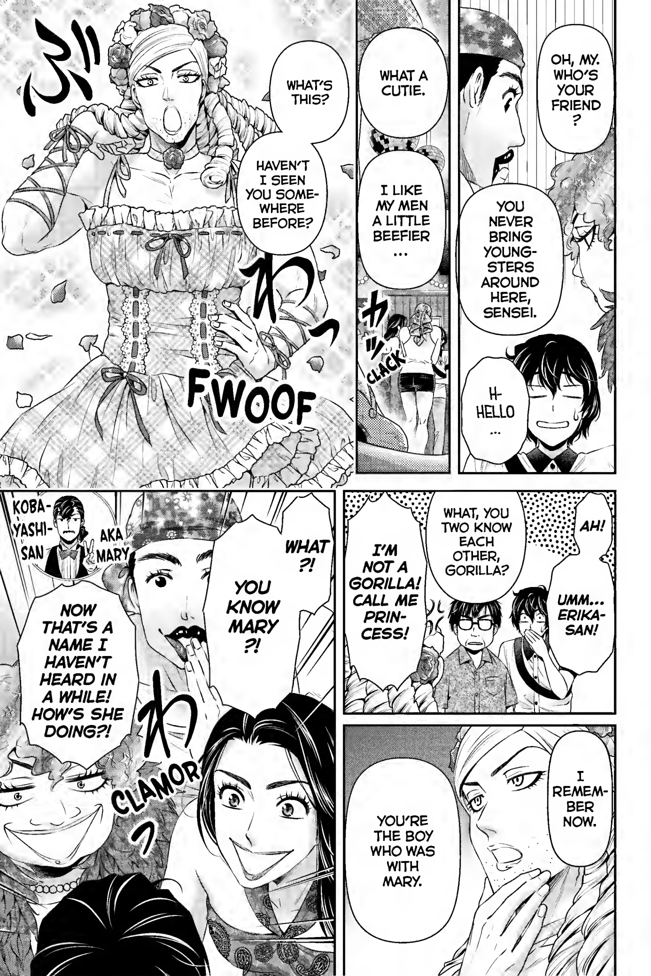

WAAAAH!
A P-PERSON...
HE'S...
A-AMBULANCE!
AH...!
A-ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!
...WHAT, YOU A ROBBER?
AIN'T NOTHIN' WORTH TAKING HERE.
SKRIT ボリ
SKRIT ボリ
MRR...?
OH, NO...
UMM. TSUTAYA-SAN FROM SHINKOSHA SENT ME.
MY NAME IS FUJII...
TSU-TAYA?

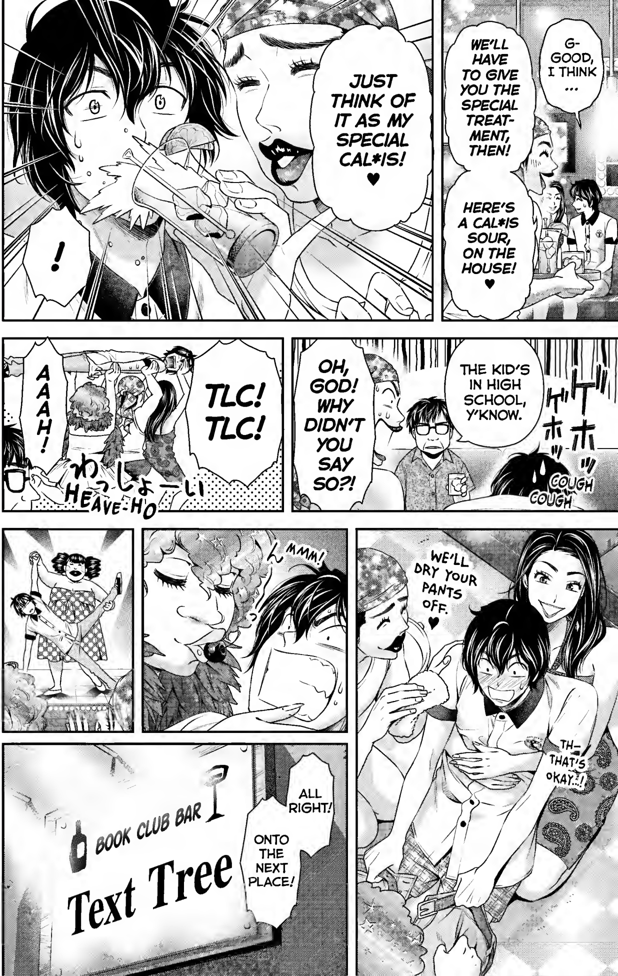

OHH!
PAT PAT
RIGHT, RIGHT! LITTLE TSUTAYA!
THAT'S RIGHT, HE CALLED THE OTHER DAY!
YES... I'LL BE IN YOUR CARE FOR—
SO,
YOU'RE THE KID WHO HAD A ONE-SHOT IN LAST MONTH'S *BUNGEIKATO*, RIGHT?
PERSONALLY, I DON'T THINK THAT WAS UP TO SNUFF FOR PUBLISHING YET.
FOR STARTERS, THE PROTAGONIST'S CHARACTERIZATION WAS TOO WORDY.
YOU DON'T LEAVE ANY ROOM FOR IMAGINATION IF YOU SPELL EVERYTHING OUT. DON'T TREAT THE READERS LIKE IDIOTS.
AND I DON'T AGREE WITH PUTTING THE GIRL'S MONOLOGUE RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE.
YOU SHOULD'VE SAVED THAT FOR THE VERY END.
IF YOU'RE GONNA WRITE SOMETHING THAT HARMLESS, YOU MIGHT AS WELL GIVE IT A LITTLE PUNCH...
R-RIGHT!
DON'T WRITE IT DOWN, MEMORIZE IT!

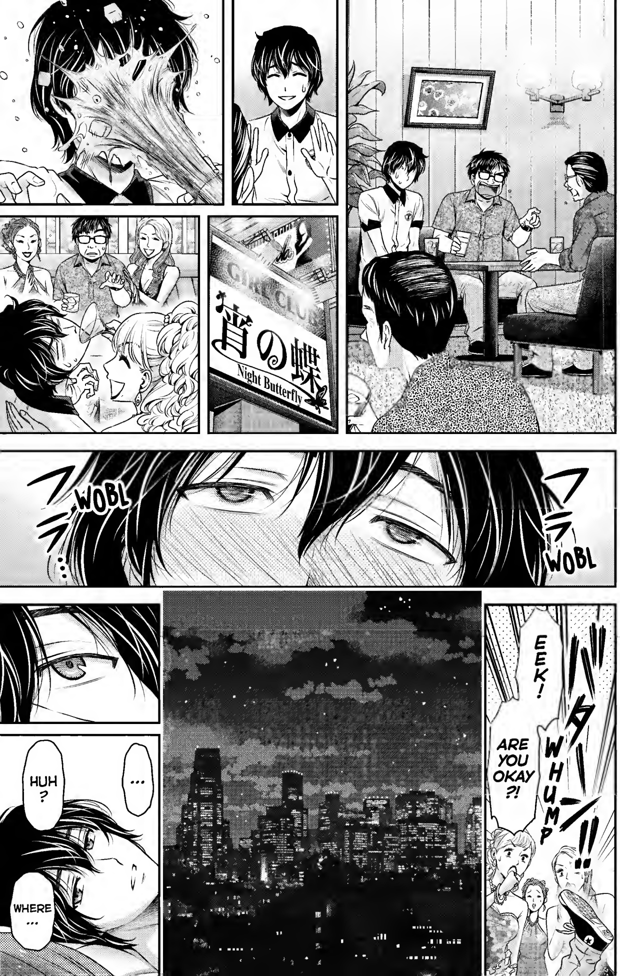

ANYWAY,
I'M GOIN' BACK TO BED.
TIDY UP THE PLACE, WILL YOU? DOESN'T HAVE TO BE THOROUGH.
AND SORT OUT THE RECEIPTS.
OKAY ...!
バタンッ
THUD
...
ガラッ
SLIDE
OH.
GOOD MORNING.

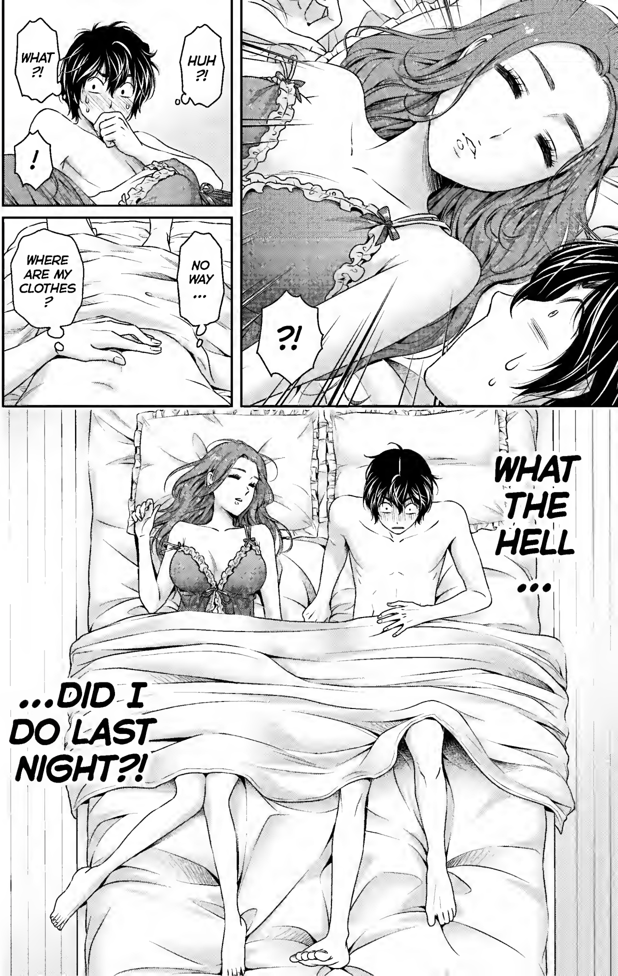

SORRY, I STILL HAVE A BIT LEFT TO CLEAN...
I SORTED THE RECEIPTS BY MONTH,
AND ORGANIZED THE BOOKS BY GENRE.
I PUT THE LARGE BOOKS IN BOXES.
HUH...
NOT BAD.
YOU GOOD AT CLEANING OR SOMETHING?
I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THAT.
MY MOTHER DIED WHEN I WAS LITTLE...
...SO I HAD TO DO THE HOUSEWORK GROWING UP.
AH...
...
I'M GOIN' OUT.

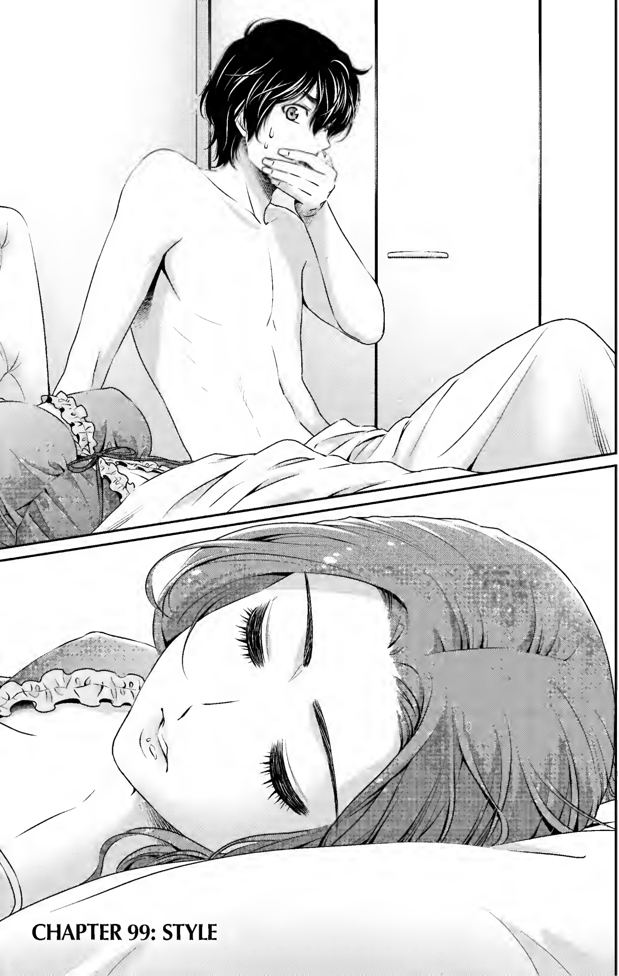

A-
ARE YOU GOING TO GATHER MATERIAL?!
WELL,
SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
WANNA COME?
YES, PLEASE!
SENSEEEI! ♥
WELCOME! ♥♥
IF IT AIN'T THE PARAMECIUM POSSE. HOW'S IT GOING?
YOU BIG MEANIE!
BUT I GUESS IT'S BETTER THAN BEING CALLED MAGGOTS. ♥
A...
GAY BAR?!


OH, MY. WHO'S YOUR FRIEND?
YOU NEVER BRING YOUNGSTERS AROUND HERE, SENSEI.
H-HELLO...
WHAT A CUTIE.
I LIKE MY MEN A LITTLE BEEFIER...
カツ
CLACK
ぶ
WHAT'S THIS?
HAVEN'T I SEEN YOU SOMEWHERE BEFORE?
わっ
FWOOF
AH!
WHAT, YOU TWO KNOW EACH OTHER, GORILLA?
I'M NOT A GORILLA! CALL ME PRINCESS!
UMM... ERIKA-SAN!
I REMEMBER NOW.
YOU'RE THE BOY WHO WAS WITH MARY.
WHAT?!
YOU KNOW MARY?!
KOBAYASHI-SAN
AKA MARY
NOW THAT'S A NAME I HAVEN'T HEARD IN A WHILE! HOW'S SHE DOING?!
わっ
CLAMOR

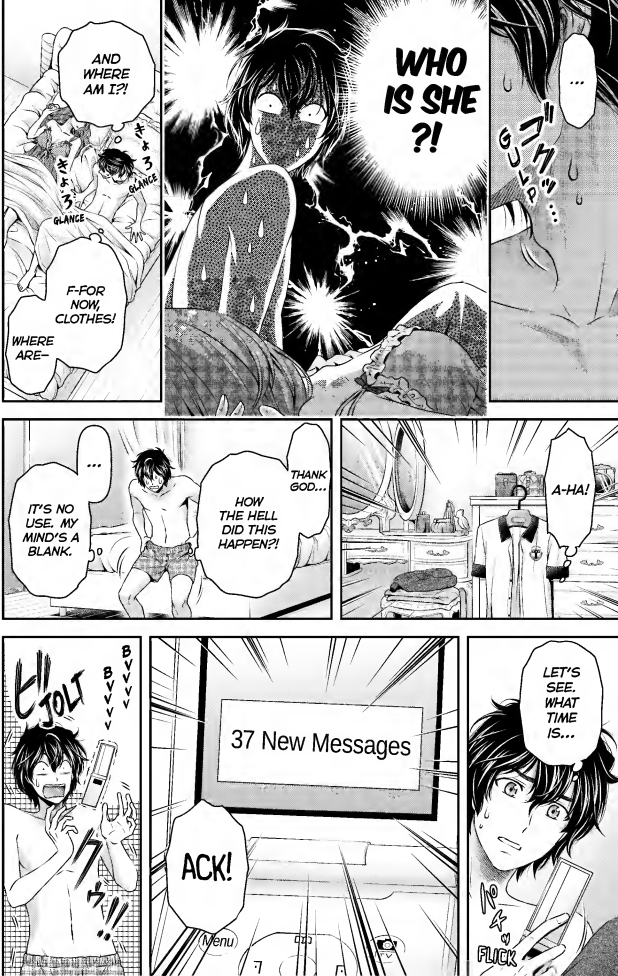

G-GOOD, I THINK...
WE'LL HAVE TO GIVE YOU THE SPECIAL TREATMENT, THEN!
HERE'S A CAL*IS SOUR, ON THE HOUSE! ♥
JUST THINK OF IT AS MY SPECIAL CAL*IS! ♥
!
THE KID'S IN HIGH SCHOOL, Y'KNOW.
ゲホッ ゲホッ
COUGH COUGH
OH, GOD! WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY SO?!
TLC! TLC!
AAAAH!
わっしょーい
HEAVE-HO
WE'LL DRY YOUR PANTS OFF. ♥
TH-THAT'S OKAY..!
ん
MMM!
BOOK CLUB BAR
Text Tree
ALL RIGHT!
ONTO THE NEXT PLACE!

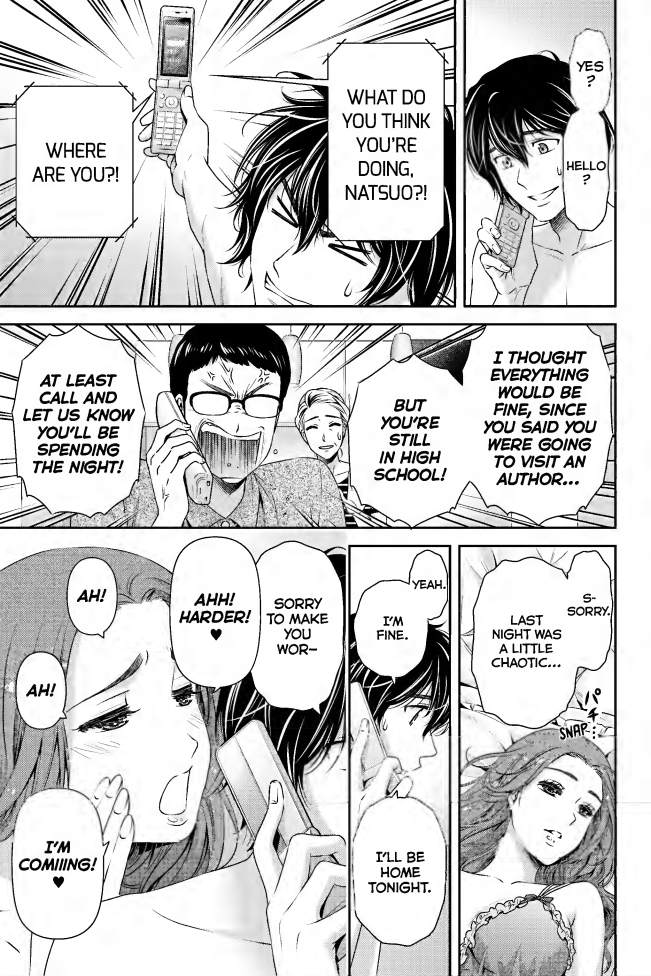

GIRL CLUB
宵の蝶
Night Butterfly
WOBL
WOBL
EEK!
ARE YOU OKAY?!
バタ
WHUMP
!!
...
HUH?
WHERE ...

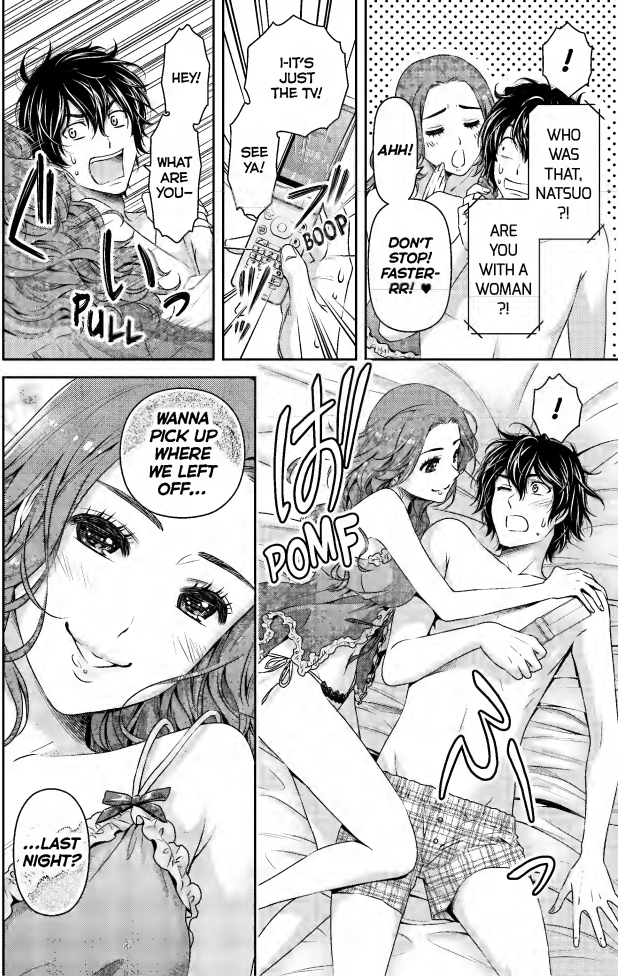

?!
HUH ?!
WHAT ?!
!
NO WAY ...
WHERE ARE MY CLOTHES ?
WHAT THE HELL ...
...DID I DO LAST NIGHT?!

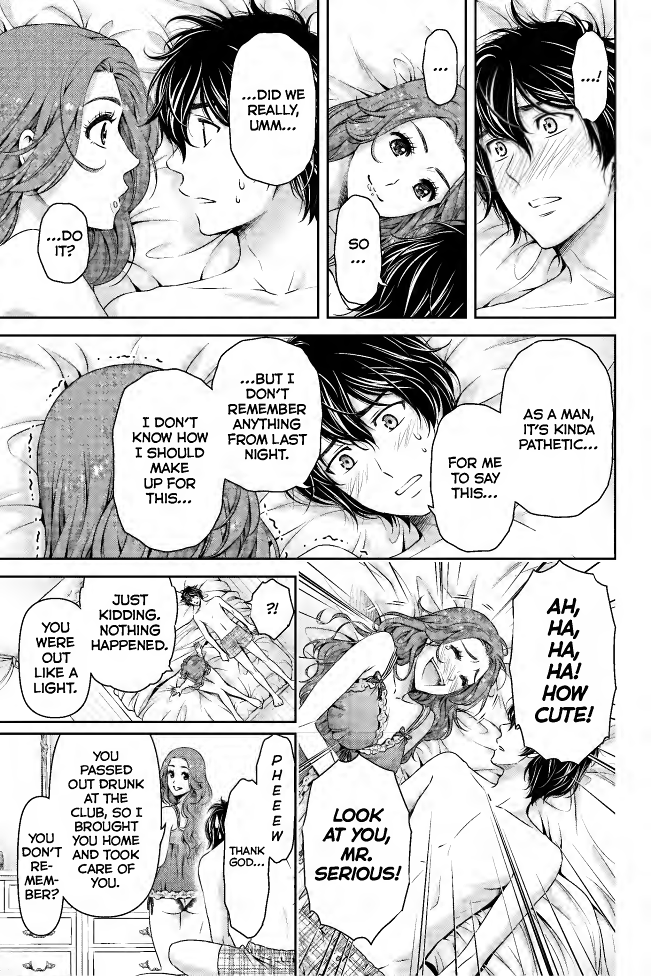


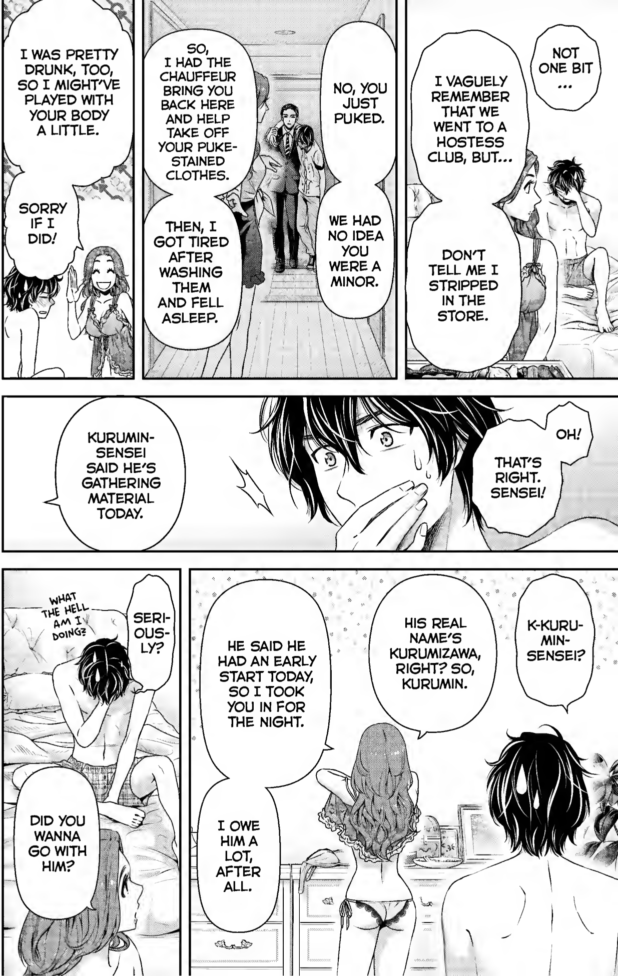
CHAPTER 99: STYLE

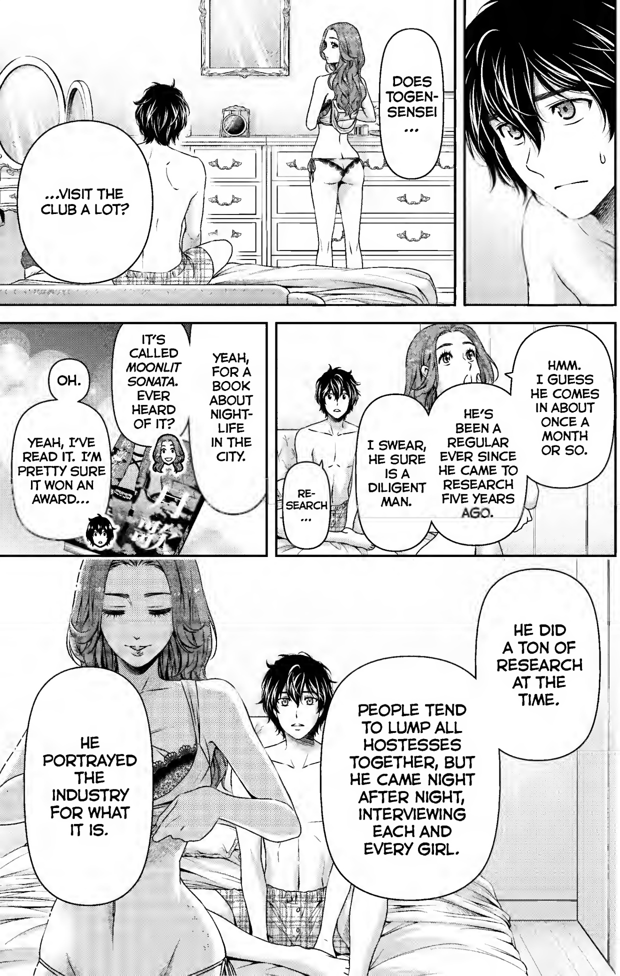

...
ゴクッ
GULP...
WHO IS SHE ?!
AND WHERE AM I?!
きょろ
GLANCE
きょろ
GLANCE
F-FOR NOW, CLOTHES!
WHERE ARE–
A-HA!
THANK GOD...
HOW THE HELL DID THIS HAPPEN?!
...
IT'S NO USE. MY MIND'S A BLANK.
LET'S SEE. WHAT TIME IS...
パチ
FLICK
37 New Messages
Menu
TV
ACK!
ビリ
JOLT
BVVVV
BVVVV
ク
ウ!!

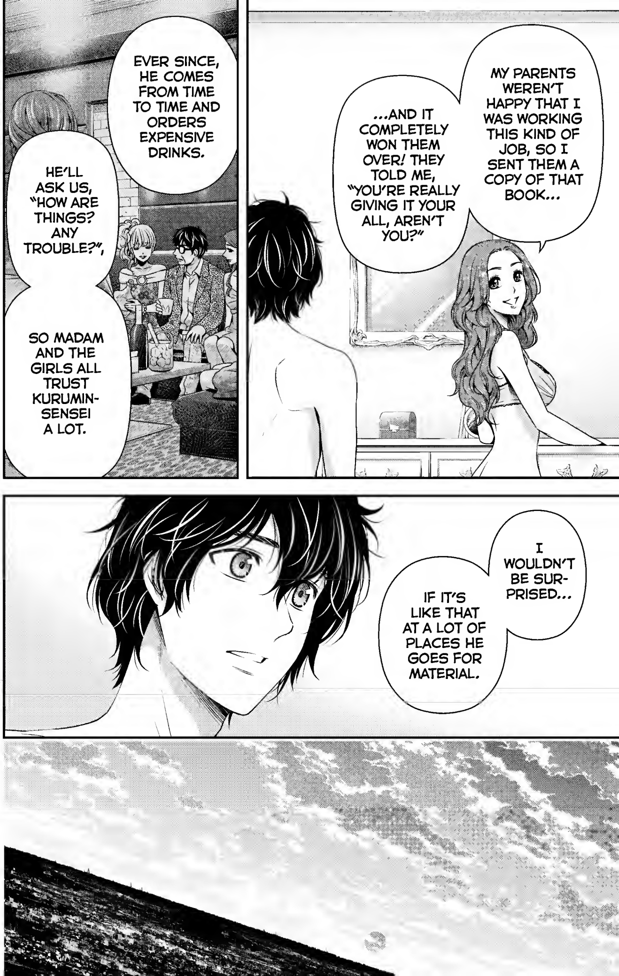

YES?
HELLO?
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING, NATSUO?!
WHERE ARE YOU?!
I THOUGHT EVERYTHING WOULD BE FINE, SINCE YOU SAID YOU WERE GOING TO VISIT AN AUTHOR...
BUT YOU'RE STILL IN HIGH SCHOOL!
AT LEAST CALL AND LET US KNOW YOU'LL BE SPENDING THE NIGHT!
S-SORRY.
LAST NIGHT WAS A LITTLE CHAOTIC...
パチ
SNAP:
YEAH.
I'M FINE.
I'LL BE HOME TONIGHT.
SORRY TO MAKE YOU WOR–
AHH! HARDER! ♥
AH!
AH!
I'M COMIIING! ♥

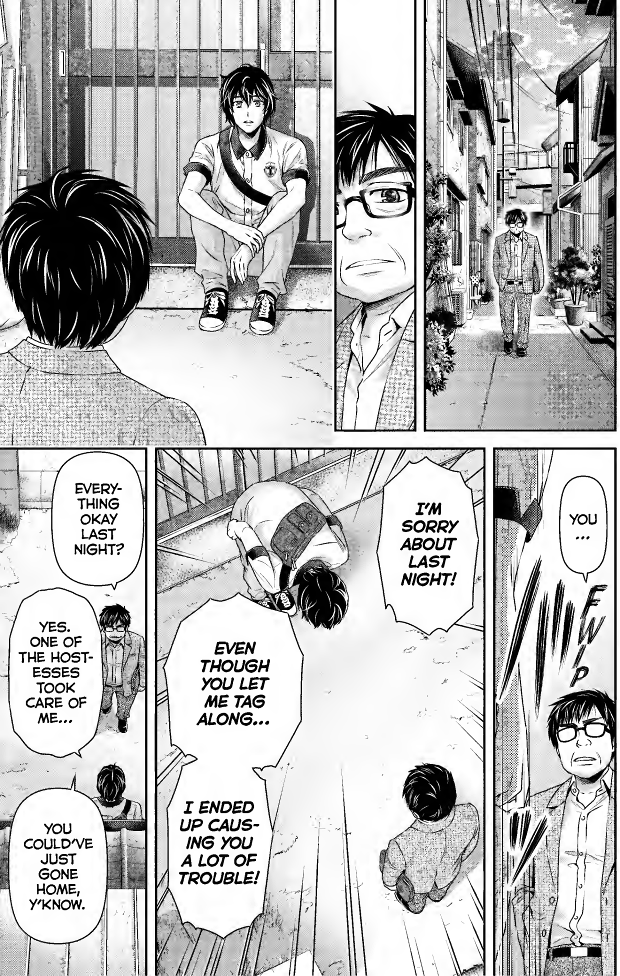

!
WHO WAS THAT, NATSUO ?!
ARE YOU WITH A WOMAN ?!
AHH!
DON'T STOP! FASTER-RR! ♥
I-IT'S JUST THE TV!
SEE YA!
BOOP
HEY!
WHAT ARE YOU—
ぐいっ
PULL
!
は
POMF
WANNA PICK UP WHERE WE LEFT OFF...
...LAST NIGHT?

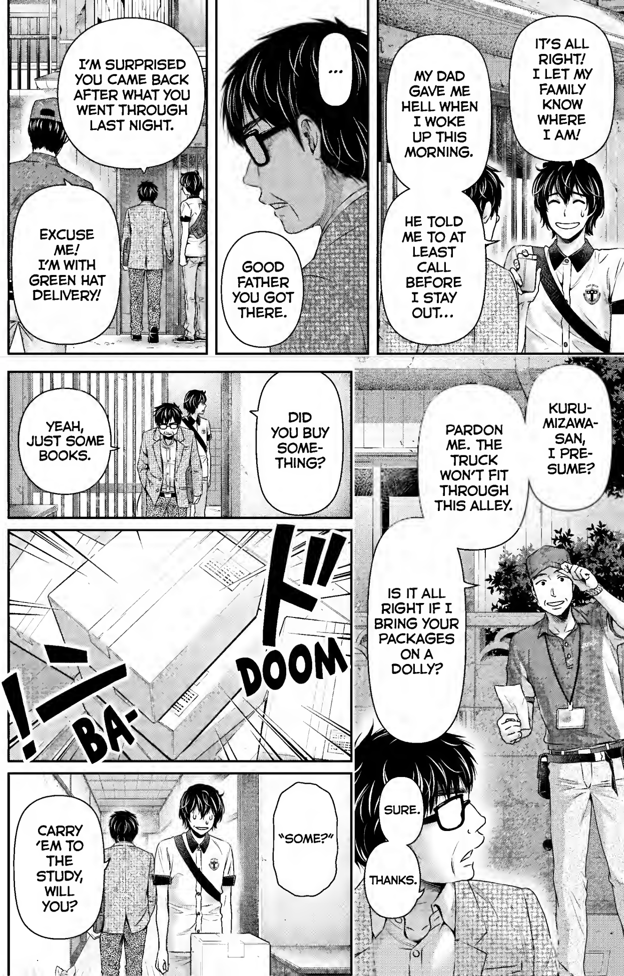

...!
...
SO ...
...DID WE REALLY, UMM...
...DO IT?
AS A MAN, IT'S KINDA PATHETIC...
FOR ME TO SAY THIS...
...BUT I DON'T REMEMBER ANYTHING FROM LAST NIGHT.
I DON'T KNOW HOW I SHOULD MAKE UP FOR THIS...
AH, HA, HA, HA! HOW CUTE!
LOOK AT YOU, MR. SERIOUS!
?!
JUST KIDDING. NOTHING HAPPENED.
YOU WERE OUT LIKE A LIGHT.
PHEEEEW
THANK GOD...
YOU PASSED OUT DRUNK AT THE CLUB, SO I BROUGHT YOU HOME AND TOOK CARE OF YOU.
YOU DON'T REMEMBER?

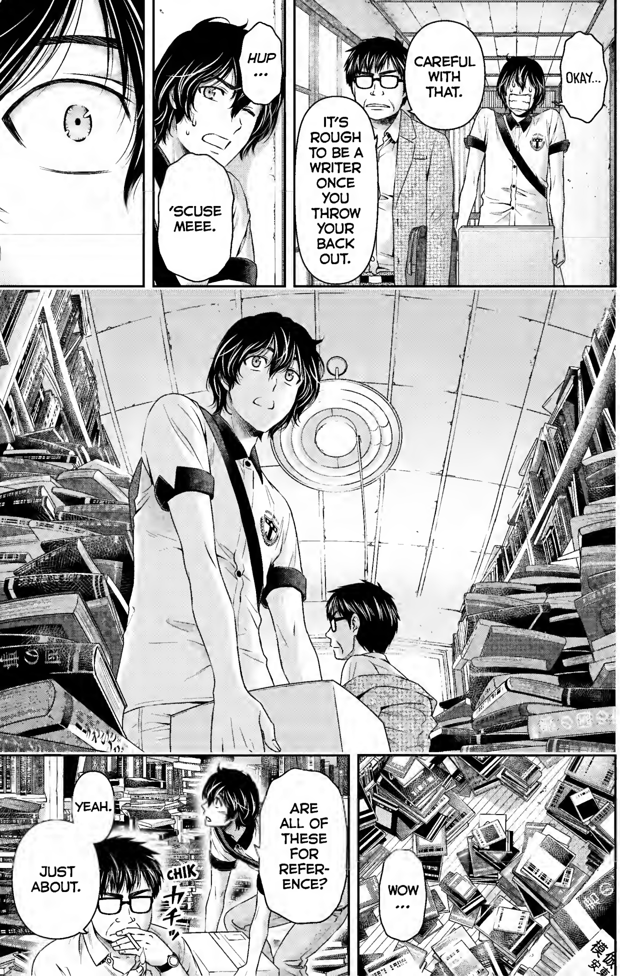

NOT ONE BIT ...
I VAGUELY REMEMBER THAT WE WENT TO A HOSTESS CLUB, BUT...
DON'T TELL ME I STRIPPED IN THE STORE.
NO, YOU JUST PUKED.
WE HAD NO IDEA YOU WERE A MINOR.
SO, I HAD THE CHAUFFEUR BRING YOU BACK HERE AND HELP TAKE OFF YOUR PUKE-STAINED CLOTHES.
THEN, I GOT TIRED AFTER WASHING THEM AND FELL ASLEEP.
I WAS PRETTY DRUNK, TOO, SO I MIGHT'VE PLAYED WITH YOUR BODY A LITTLE.
SORRY IF I DID!
OH!
THAT'S RIGHT. SENSEI!
KURUMIN-SENSEI SAID HE'S GATHERING MATERIAL TODAY.
K-KURUMIN-SENSEI?
HIS REAL NAME'S KURUMIZAWA, RIGHT? SO, KURUMIN.
HE SAID HE HAD AN EARLY START TODAY, SO I TOOK YOU IN FOR THE NIGHT.
I OWE HIM A LOT, AFTER ALL.
SERIOUSLY?
WHAT THE HELL AM I DOING?
DID YOU WANNA GO WITH HIM?

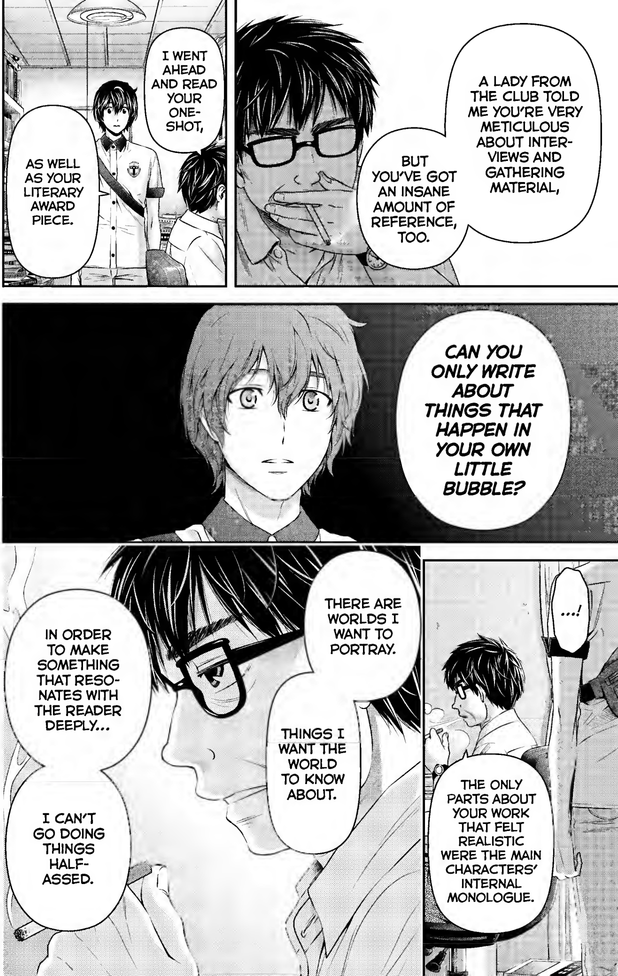

DOES TOGEN-SENSEI ...
...VISIT THE CLUB A LOT?
HMM. I GUESS HE COMES IN ABOUT ONCE A MONTH OR SO.
HE'S BEEN A REGULAR EVER SINCE HE CAME TO RESEARCH FIVE YEARS AGO.
I SWEAR, HE SURE IS A DILIGENT MAN.
RE-SEARCH ...
YEAH, FOR A BOOK ABOUT NIGHT-LIFE IN THE CITY.
IT'S CALLED *MOONLIT SONATA*. EVER HEARD OF IT?
OH.
YEAH, I'VE READ IT. I'M PRETTY SURE IT WON AN AWARD...
HE DID A TON OF RESEARCH AT THE TIME.
PEOPLE TEND TO LUMP ALL HOSTESSES TOGETHER, BUT HE CAME NIGHT AFTER NIGHT, INTERVIEWING EACH AND EVERY GIRL.
HE PORTRAYED THE INDUSTRY FOR WHAT IT IS.

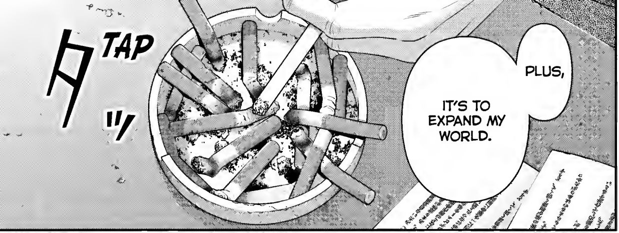

MY PARENTS WEREN'T HAPPY THAT I WAS WORKING THIS KIND OF JOB, SO I SENT THEM A COPY OF THAT BOOK...
...AND IT COMPLETELY WON THEM OVER! THEY TOLD ME, "YOU'RE REALLY GIVING IT YOUR ALL, AREN'T YOU?"
EVER SINCE, HE COMES FROM TIME TO TIME AND ORDERS EXPENSIVE DRINKS.
HE'LL ASK US, "HOW ARE THINGS? ANY TROUBLE?",
SO MADAM AND THE GIRLS ALL TRUST KURUMIN-SENSEI A LOT.
I WOULDN'T BE SURPRISED...
IF IT'S LIKE THAT AT A LOT OF PLACES HE GOES FOR MATERIAL.

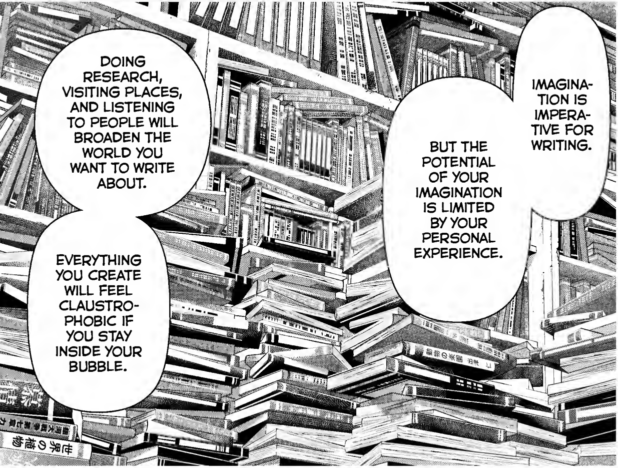

YOU ...
FWIP
I'M SORRY ABOUT LAST NIGHT!
EVEN THOUGH YOU LET ME TAG ALONG...
I ENDED UP CAUSING YOU A LOT OF TROUBLE!
EVERYTHING OKAY LAST NIGHT?
YES. ONE OF THE HOSTESSES TOOK CARE OF ME...
YOU COULD'VE JUST GONE HOME, Y'KNOW.

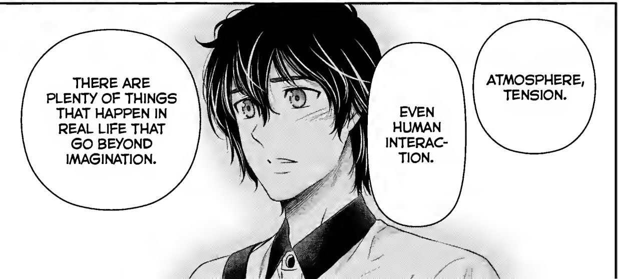

IT'S ALL RIGHT! I LET MY FAMILY KNOW WHERE I AM!
MY DAD GAVE ME HELL WHEN I WOKE UP THIS MORNING.
HE TOLD ME TO AT LEAST CALL BEFORE I STAY OUT…
…
GOOD FATHER YOU GOT THERE.
I'M SURPRISED YOU CAME BACK AFTER WHAT YOU WENT THROUGH LAST NIGHT.
EXCUSE ME! I'M WITH GREEN HAT DELIVERY!
KURUMIZAWA-SAN, I PRESUME?
PARDON ME. THE TRUCK WON'T FIT THROUGH THIS ALLEY.
IS IT ALL RIGHT IF I BRING YOUR PACKAGES ON A DOLLY?
SURE.
THANKS.
DID YOU BUY SOMETHING?
YEAH, JUST SOME BOOKS.
ドド
BA-DOOM
!
"SOME?"
CARRY 'EM TO THE STUDY, WILL YOU?

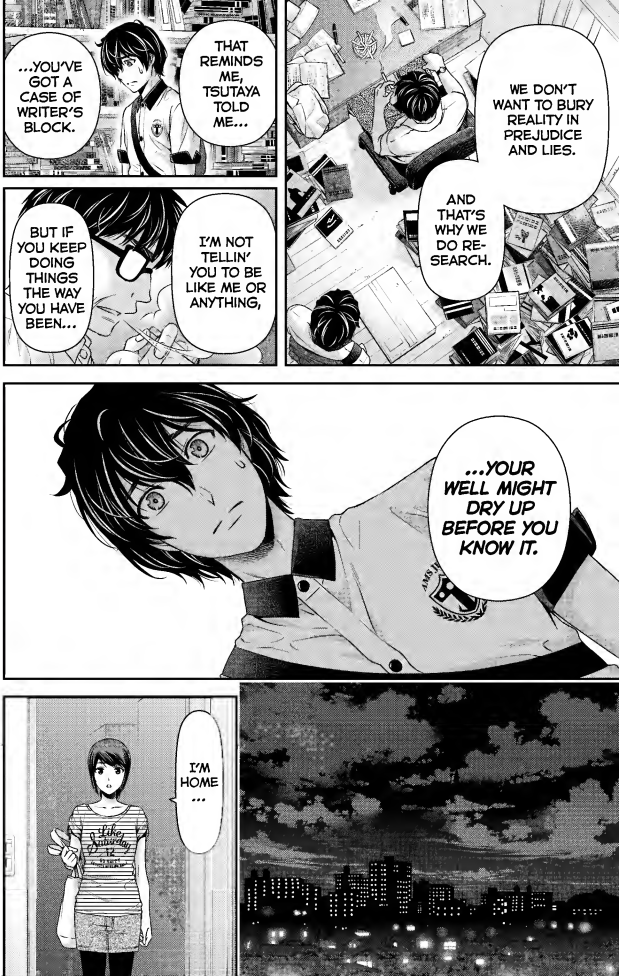

OKAY...
CAREFUL WITH THAT.
IT'S ROUGH TO BE A WRITER ONCE YOU THROW YOUR BACK OUT.
HUP ...
'SCUSE MEEE.
WOW ...
ARE ALL OF THESE FOR REFER-ENCE?
YEAH.
JUST ABOUT.
CHIK
カチッ

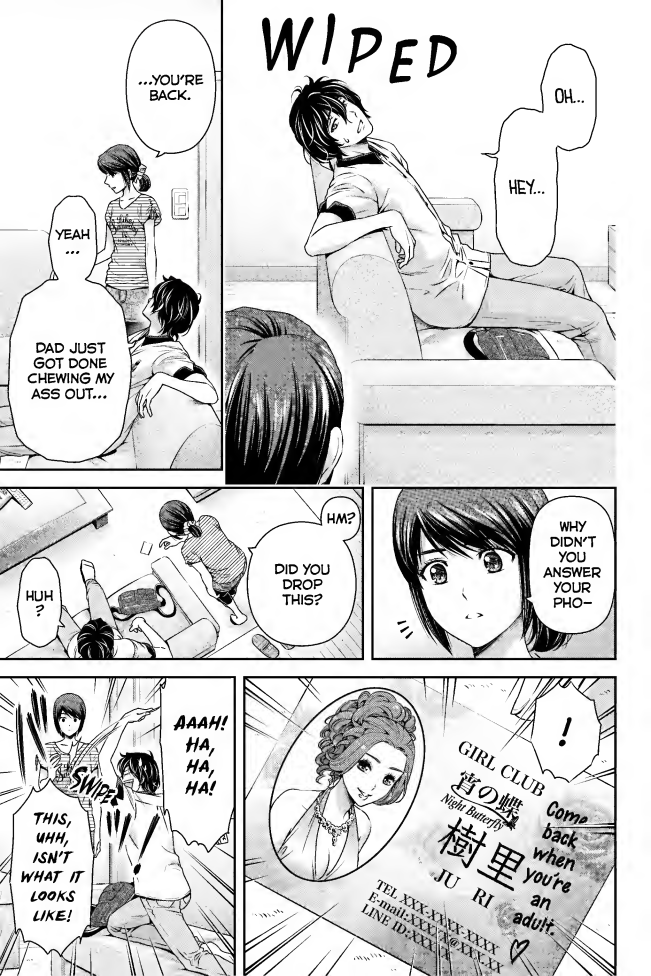

A LADY FROM THE CLUB TOLD ME YOU'RE VERY METICULOUS ABOUT INTERVIEWS AND GATHERING MATERIAL,
BUT YOU'VE GOT AN INSANE AMOUNT OF REFERENCE, TOO.
I WENT AHEAD AND READ YOUR ONE-SHOT,
AS WELL AS YOUR LITERARY AWARD PIECE.
CAN YOU ONLY WRITE ABOUT THINGS THAT HAPPEN IN YOUR OWN LITTLE BUBBLE?
...!
THE ONLY PARTS ABOUT YOUR WORK THAT FELT REALISTIC WERE THE MAIN CHARACTERS' INTERNAL MONOLOGUE.
THERE ARE WORLDS I WANT TO PORTRAY.
THINGS I WANT THE WORLD TO KNOW ABOUT.
IN ORDER TO MAKE SOMETHING THAT RESONATES WITH THE READER DEEPLY...
I CAN'T GO DOING THINGS HALF-ASSED.

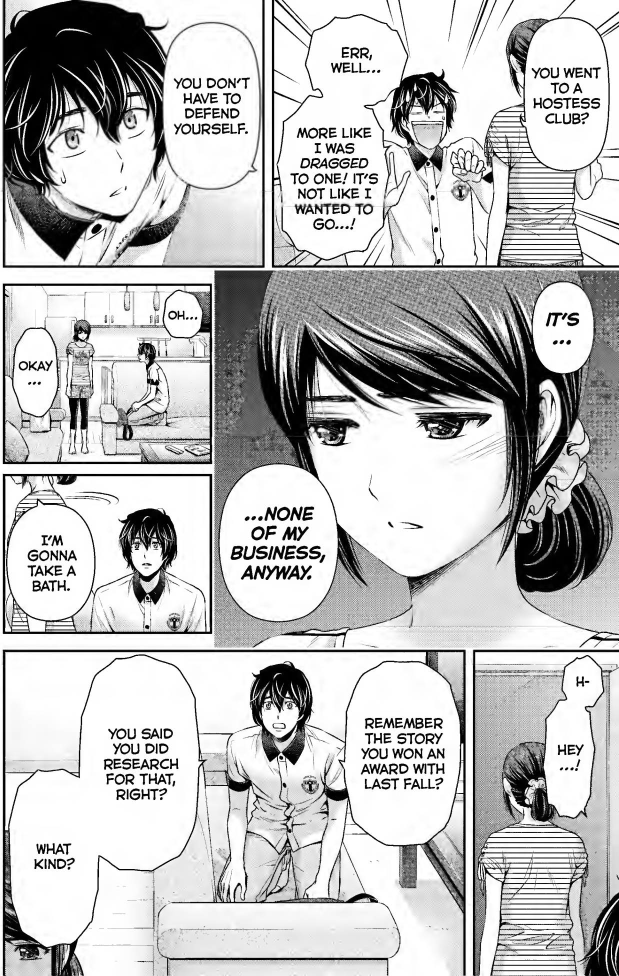

PLUS,
IT'S TO EXPAND MY WORLD.
タッ
TAP

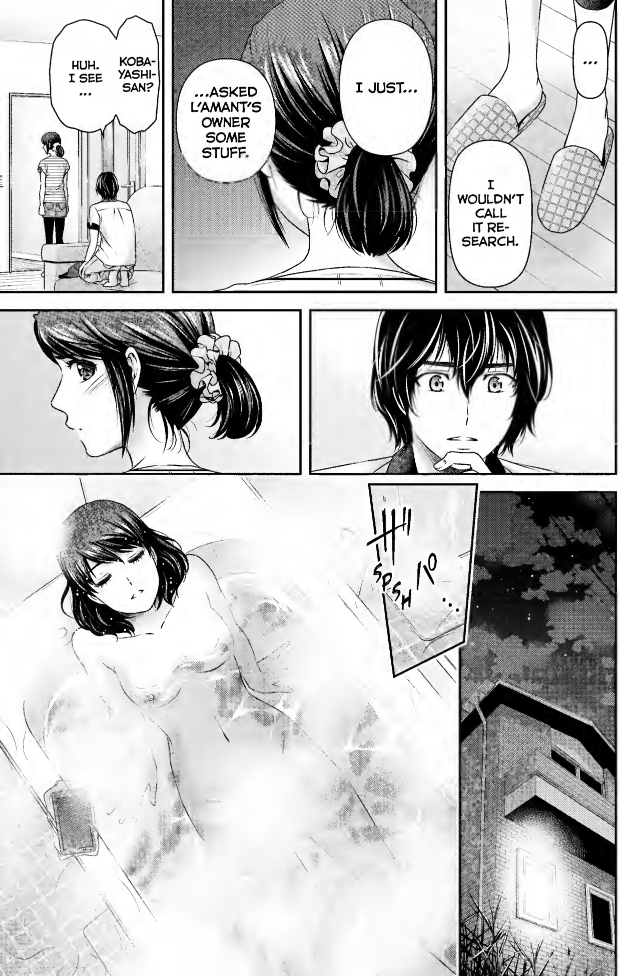

IMAGINATION IS IMPERATIVE FOR WRITING.
BUT THE POTENTIAL OF YOUR IMAGINATION IS LIMITED BY YOUR PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.
DOING RESEARCH, VISITING PLACES, AND LISTENING TO PEOPLE WILL BROADEN THE WORLD YOU WANT TO WRITE ABOUT.
EVERYTHING YOU CREATE WILL FEEL CLAUSTROPHOBIC IF YOU STAY INSIDE YOUR BUBBLE.
世界の植物

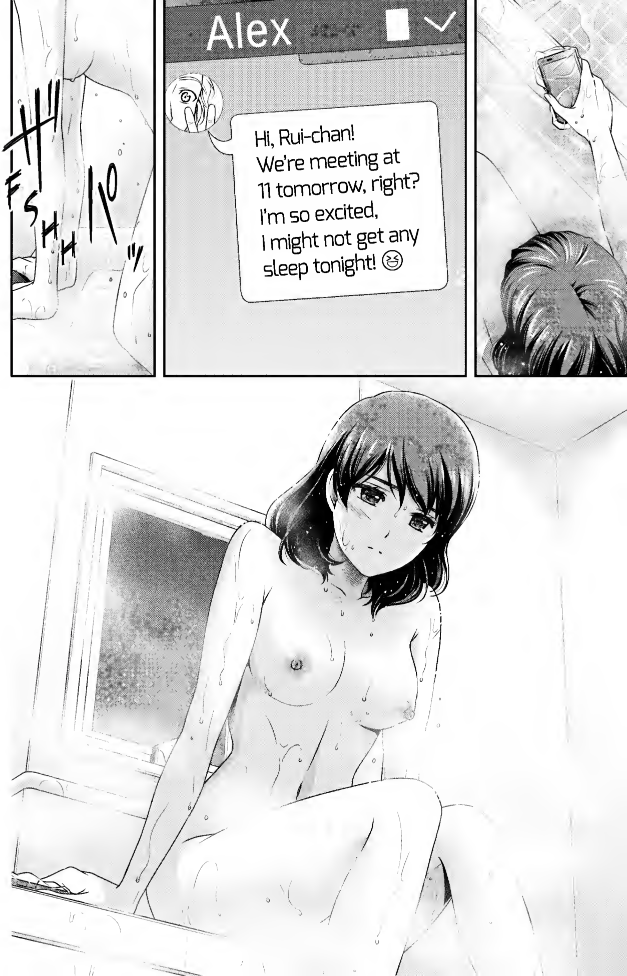

ATMOSPHERE, TENSION.
EVEN HUMAN INTERACTION.
THERE ARE PLENTY OF THINGS THAT HAPPEN IN REAL LIFE THAT GO BEYOND IMAGINATION.


WE DON'T WANT TO BURY REALITY IN PREJUDICE AND LIES.
AND THAT'S WHY WE DO RESEARCH.
THAT REMINDS ME, TSUTAYA TOLD ME...
...YOU'VE GOT A CASE OF WRITER'S BLOCK.
I'M NOT TELLIN' YOU TO BE LIKE ME OR ANYTHING,
BUT IF YOU KEEP DOING THINGS THE WAY YOU HAVE BEEN...
...YOUR WELL MIGHT DRY UP BEFORE YOU KNOW IT.
Like Saturday 12
I'M HOME...


WIPED
OH... HEY...
...YOU'RE BACK.
YEAH ... DAD JUST GOT DONE CHEWING MY ASS OUT...
WHY DIDN'T YOU ANSWER YOUR PHO—
HM? DID YOU DROP THIS?
HUH ?
!
GIRL CLUB
宵の蝶 Night Butterfly
樹里 JU RI
TEL XXX-XXXX-XXXX
E-mail:XXXXX@XXX.XX
LINE ID:XXXXX
Come back when you're an adult. ♡
AAAH! HA, HA, HA!
SWIPE
THIS, UHH, ISN'T WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE!

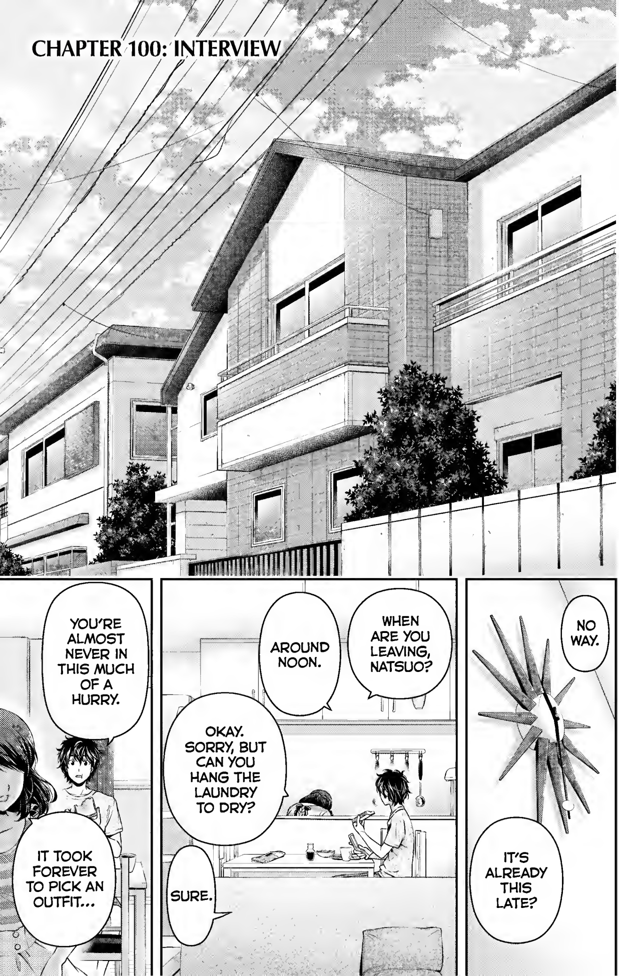

YOU WENT TO A HOSTESS CLUB?
ERR, WELL...
MORE LIKE I WAS *DRAGGED* TO ONE! IT'S NOT LIKE I WANTED TO GO...!
YOU DON'T HAVE TO DEFEND YOURSELF.
IT'S ...
...NONE OF MY BUSINESS, ANYWAY.
OH...
OKAY ...
I'M GONNA TAKE A BATH.
H- HEY ...!
REMEMBER THE STORY YOU WON AN AWARD WITH LAST FALL?
YOU SAID YOU DID RESEARCH FOR THAT, RIGHT?
WHAT KIND?

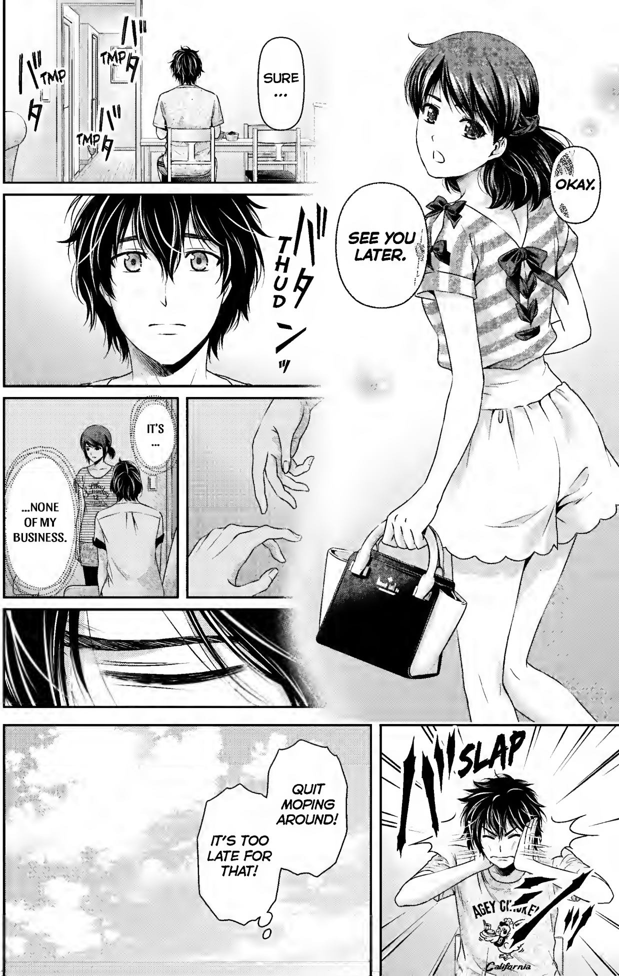

...
I WOULDN'T CALL IT RESEARCH.
I JUST...
...ASKED L'AMANT'S OWNER SOME STUFF.
KOBAYASHI-SAN?
HUH. I SEE ...
SPSH...

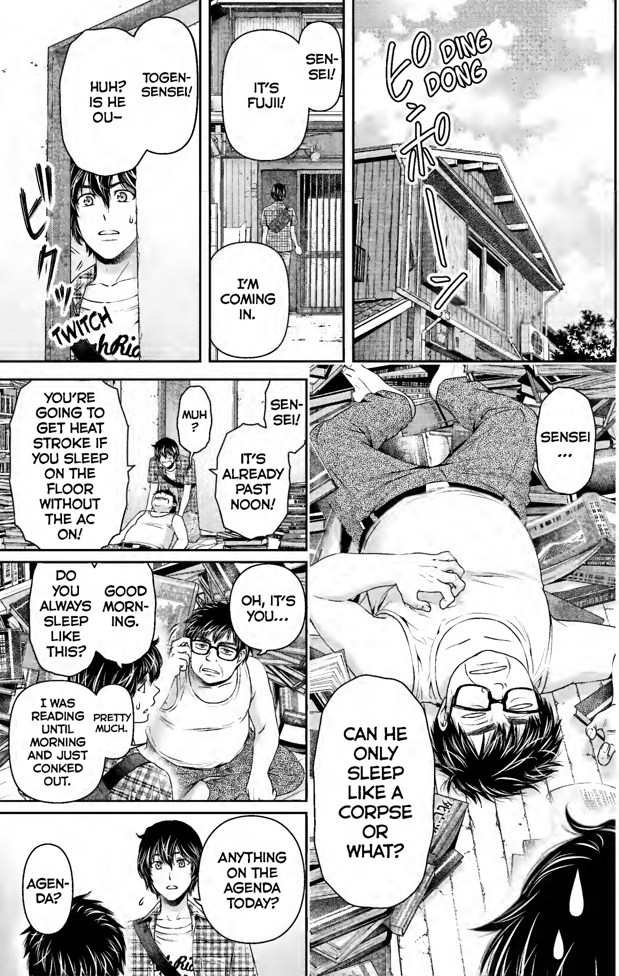


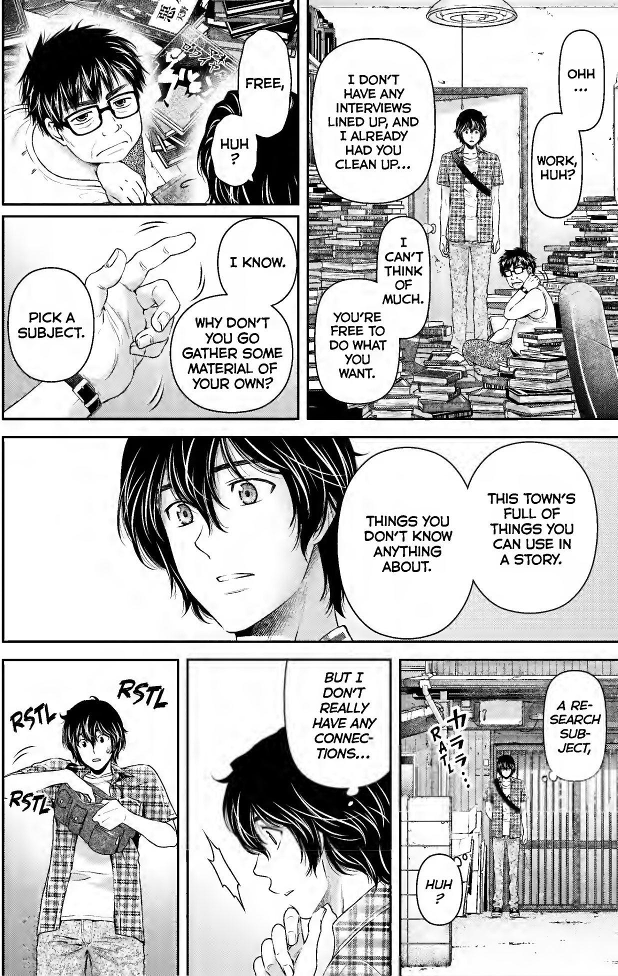
Hi, Rui-chan!
We're meeting at 11 tomorrow, right?
I'm so excited,
I might not get any sleep tonight! 😆

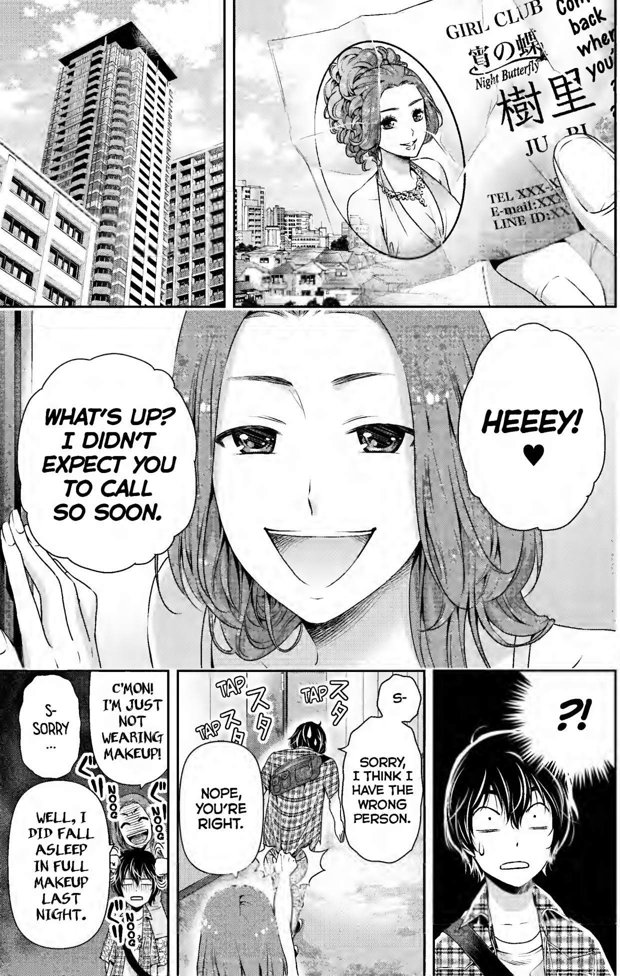
CHAPTER 100: INTERVIEW

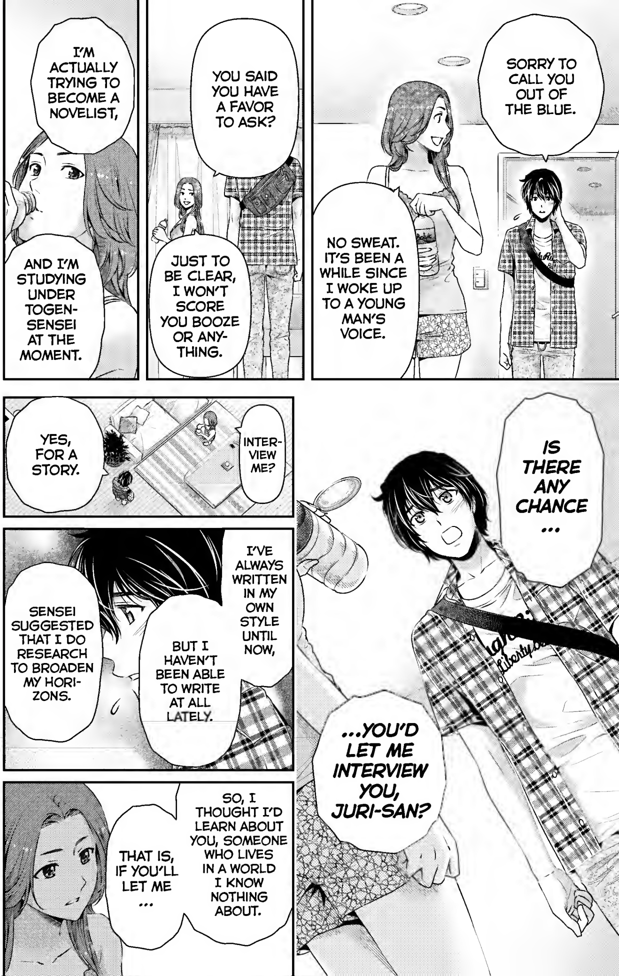

NO WAY.
IT'S ALREADY THIS LATE?
WHEN ARE YOU LEAVING, NATSUO?
AROUND NOON.
OKAY. SORRY, BUT CAN YOU HANG THE LAUNDRY TO DRY?
SURE.
YOU'RE ALMOST NEVER IN THIS MUCH OF A HURRY.
IT TOOK FOREVER TO PICK AN OUTFIT...

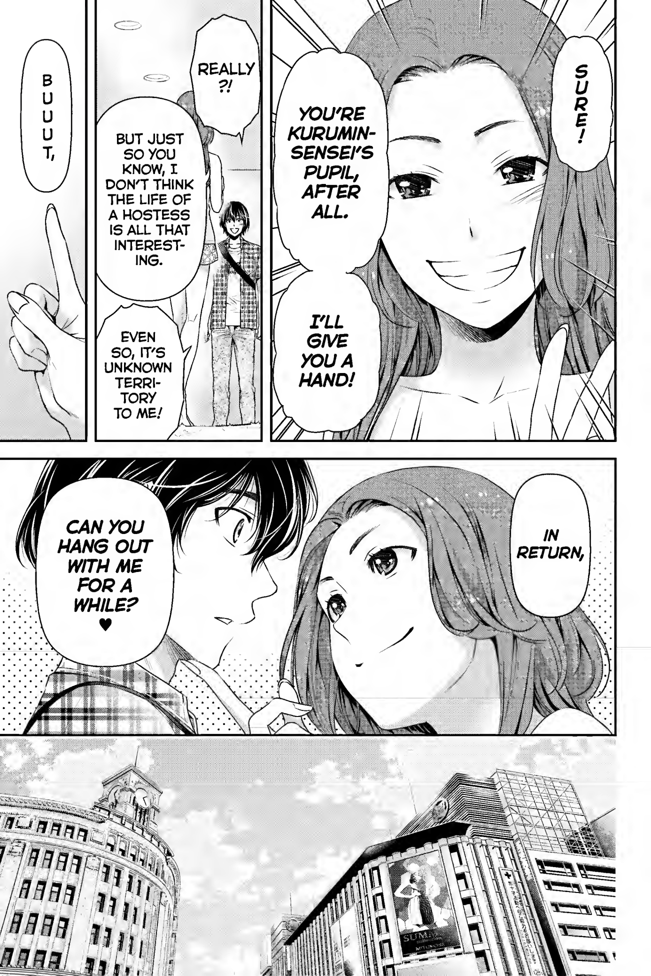

OKAY.
SEE YOU LATER.
SURE ...
バ TMP タ
バ TMP タ
バ TMP タ
バタンッ THUD
IT'S ...
...NONE OF MY BUSINESS.
SLAP
QUIT MOPING AROUND!
IT'S TOO LATE FOR THAT!
AGEY CHICKEN
California

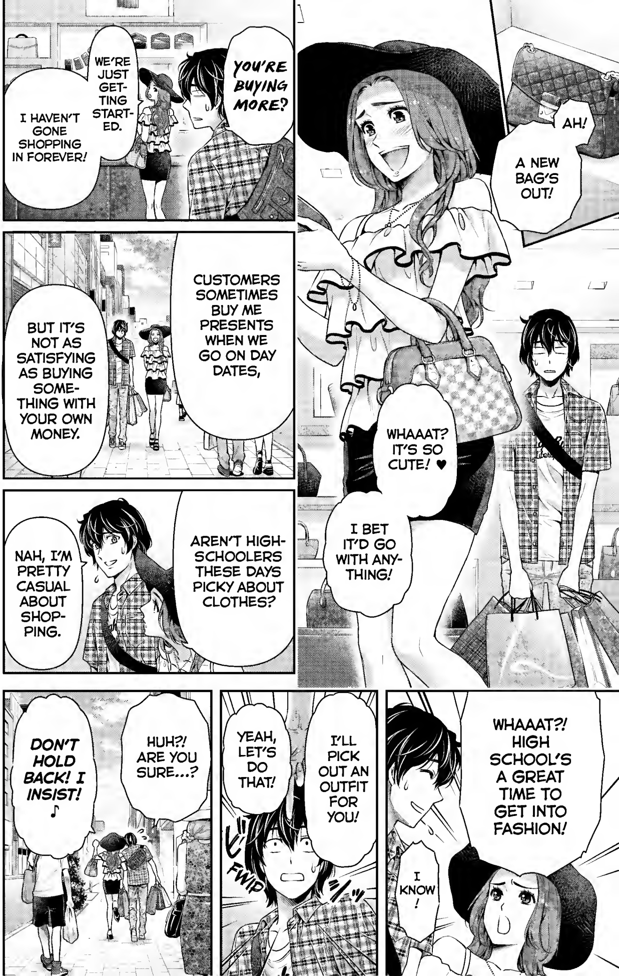

ピンポーン
DING DONG
SEN-SEI!
IT'S FUJII!
I'M COMING IN.
TOGEN-SENSEI!
HUH? IS HE OU—
ビクッ
TWITCH
SENSEI...
CAN HE ONLY SLEEP LIKE A CORPSE OR WHAT?
SEN-SEI!
IT'S ALREADY PAST NOON!
MUH?
YOU'RE GOING TO GET HEAT STROKE IF YOU SLEEP ON THE FLOOR WITHOUT THE AC ON!
OH, IT'S YOU...
GOOD MORN-ING.
DO YOU ALWAYS SLEEP LIKE THIS?
PRETTY MUCH.
I WAS READING UNTIL MORNING AND JUST CONKED OUT.
ANYTHING ON THE AGENDA TODAY?
AGEN-DA?

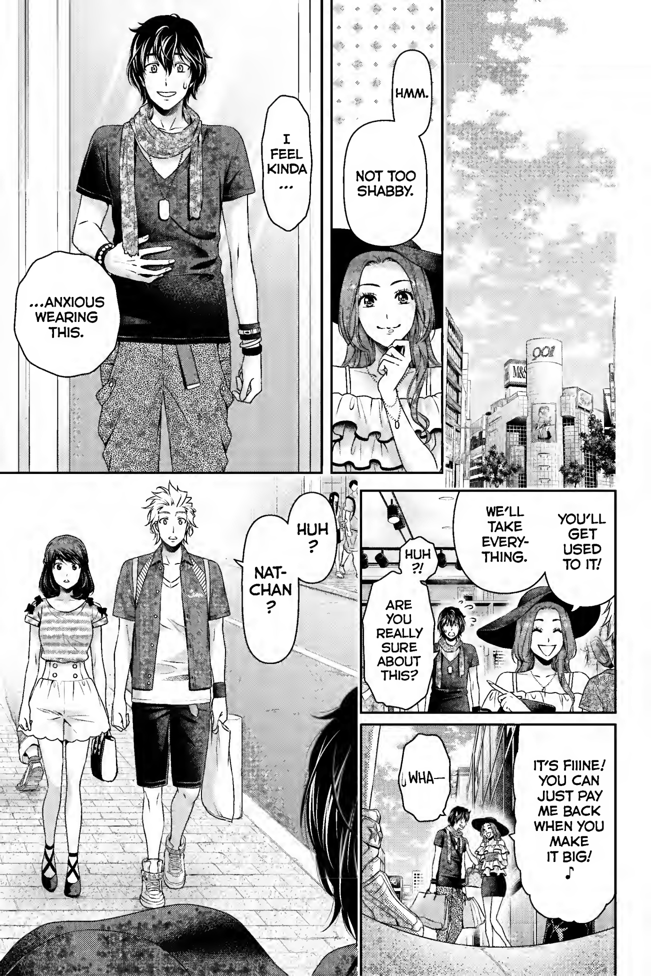

OHH ...
WORK, HUH?
I DON'T HAVE ANY INTERVIEWS LINED UP, AND I ALREADY HAD YOU CLEAN UP...
I CAN'T THINK OF MUCH.
YOU'RE FREE TO DO WHAT YOU WANT.
FREE,
HUH?
I KNOW.
WHY DON'T YOU GO GATHER SOME MATERIAL OF YOUR OWN?
PICK A SUBJECT.
THIS TOWN'S FULL OF THINGS YOU CAN USE IN A STORY.
THINGS YOU DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT.
A RESEARCH SUBJECT,
カララ…
RATL
HUH?
BUT I DON'T REALLY HAVE ANY CONNECTIONS...
RSTL
RSTL
RSTL

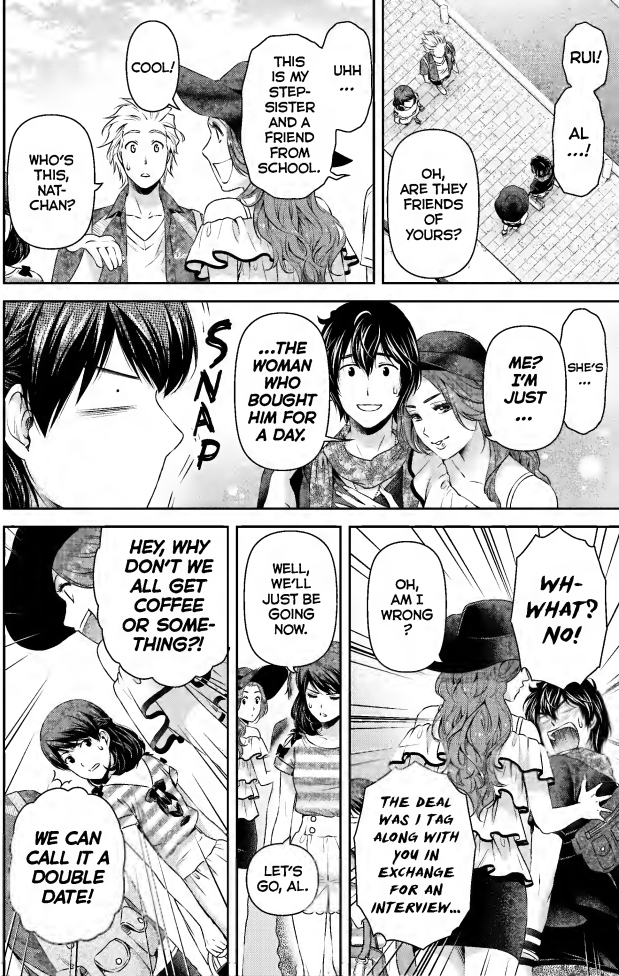

GIRL CLUB
宵の蝶
Night Butterfly
樹里
JU RI
TEL XXX-X
E-mail:XXX
LINE ID:XX
Com back when you'
HEEEY! ♥
WHAT'S UP? I DIDN'T EXPECT YOU TO CALL SO SOON.
?!
S-
SORRY, I THINK I HAVE THE WRONG PERSON.
TAP スタ TAP スタ TAP スタ
NOPE, YOU'RE RIGHT.
C'MON! I'M JUST NOT WEARING MAKEUP!
S-SORRY ...
WELL, I DID FALL ASLEEP IN FULL MAKEUP LAST NIGHT.
NOOG ぐ NOOG ぐ NOOG ぐ

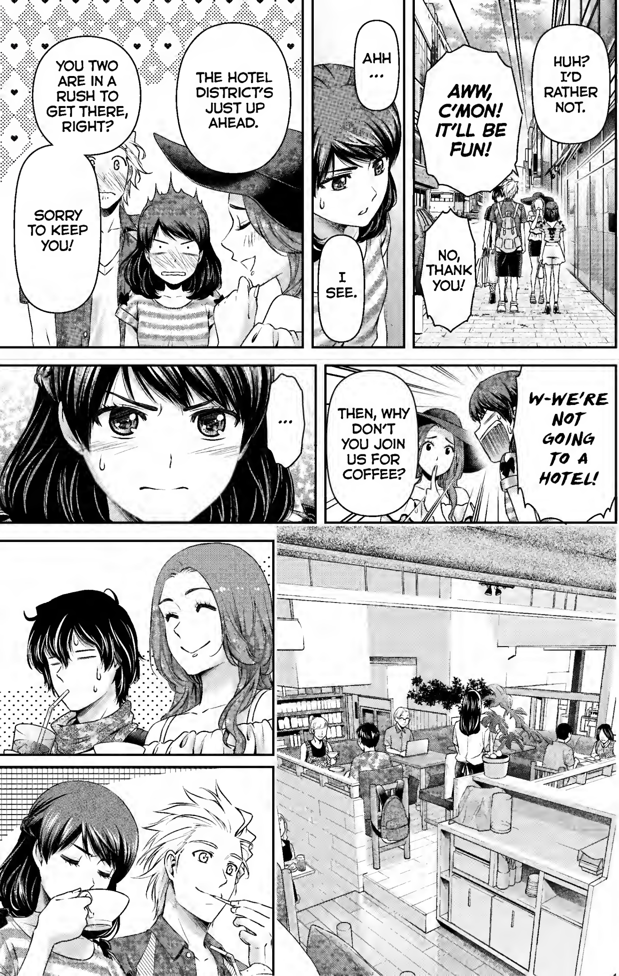

SORRY TO CALL YOU OUT OF THE BLUE.
NO SWEAT. IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE I WOKE UP TO A YOUNG MAN'S VOICE.
YOU SAID YOU HAVE A FAVOR TO ASK?
JUST TO BE CLEAR, I WON'T SCORE YOU BOOZE OR ANYTHING.
I'M ACTUALLY TRYING TO BECOME A NOVELIST,
AND I'M STUDYING UNDER TOGEN-SENSEI AT THE MOMENT.
IS THERE ANY CHANCE...
...YOU'D LET ME INTERVIEW YOU, JURI-SAN?
INTERVIEW ME?
YES, FOR A STORY.
I'VE ALWAYS WRITTEN IN MY OWN STYLE UNTIL NOW,
BUT I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO WRITE AT ALL LATELY.
SENSEI SUGGESTED THAT I DO RESEARCH TO BROADEN MY HORIZONS.
SO, I THOUGHT I'D LEARN ABOUT YOU, SOMEONE WHO LIVES IN A WORLD I KNOW NOTHING ABOUT.
THAT IS, IF YOU'LL LET ME...

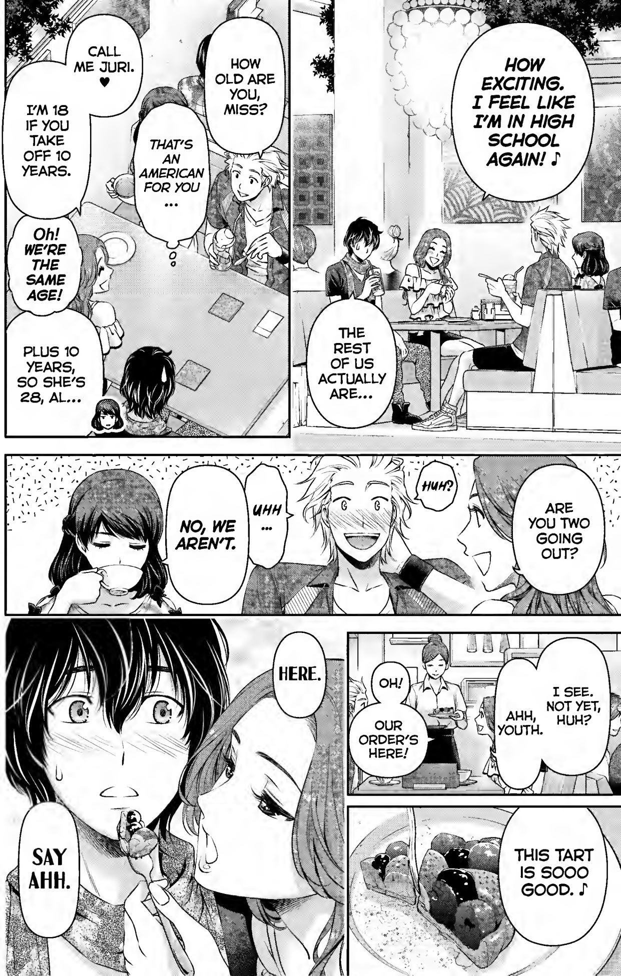

SURE!
YOU'RE KURUMIN-SENSEI'S PUPIL, AFTER ALL.
I'LL GIVE YOU A HAND!
REALLY?!
BUT JUST SO YOU KNOW, I DON'T THINK THE LIFE OF A HOSTESS IS ALL THAT INTERESTING.
EVEN SO, IT'S UNKNOWN TERRITORY TO ME!
BUUUT,
IN RETURN,
CAN YOU HANG OUT WITH ME FOR A WHILE? ♥

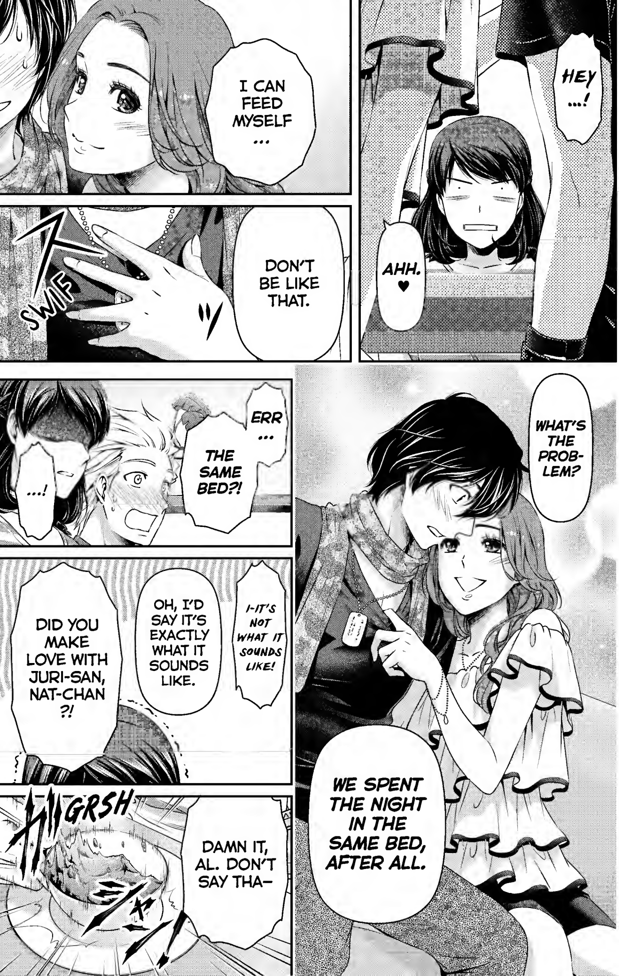

AH!
A NEW BAG'S OUT!
WHAAAT? IT'S SO CUTE! ♥
I BET IT'D GO WITH ANYTHING!
YOU'RE BUYING MORE?
WE'RE JUST GETTING STARTED.
I HAVEN'T GONE SHOPPING IN FOREVER!
CUSTOMERS SOMETIMES BUY ME PRESENTS WHEN WE GO ON DAY DATES,
BUT IT'S NOT AS SATISFYING AS BUYING SOMETHING WITH YOUR OWN MONEY.
AREN'T HIGH-SCHOOLERS THESE DAYS PICKY ABOUT CLOTHES?
NAH, I'M PRETTY CASUAL ABOUT SHOPPING.
WHAAAT?! HIGH SCHOOL'S A GREAT TIME TO GET INTO FASHION!
I KNOW!
I'LL PICK OUT AN OUTFIT FOR YOU!
YEAH, LET'S DO THAT!
FWIP
HUH?! ARE YOU SURE...?
DON'T HOLD BACK! I INSIST! ♪

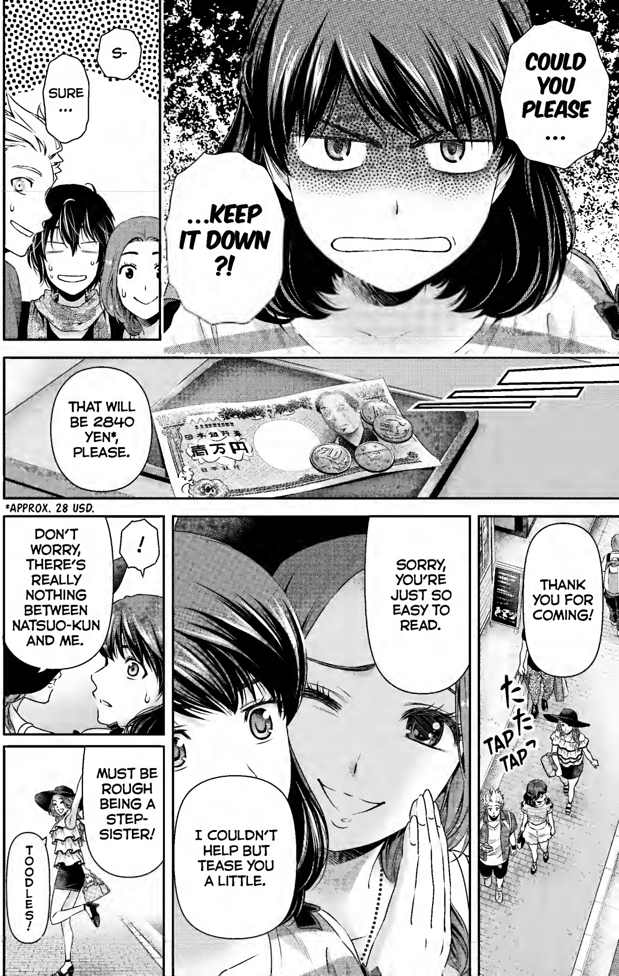

901
M&S
HMM.
NOT TOO SHABBY.
I FEEL KINDA...
...ANXIOUS WEARING THIS.
YOU'LL GET USED TO IT!
WE'LL TAKE EVERYTHING.
HUH?!
ARE YOU REALLY SURE ABOUT THIS?
IT'S FIIINE! YOU CAN JUST PAY ME BACK WHEN YOU MAKE IT BIG! ♪
WHA—
HUH?
NAT-CHAN?


RUI!
AL ...!
OH, ARE THEY FRIENDS OF YOURS?
UHH ...
THIS IS MY STEP-SISTER AND A FRIEND FROM SCHOOL.
COOL!
WHO'S THIS, NAT-CHAN?
SHE'S ...
ME? I'M JUST ...
...THE WOMAN WHO BOUGHT HIM FOR A DAY.
SNAP
WH-WHAT? NO!
OH, AM I WRONG?
THE DEAL WAS I TAG ALONG WITH YOU IN EXCHANGE FOR AN INTERVIEW...
WELL, WE'LL JUST BE GOING NOW.
LET'S GO, AL.
HEY, WHY DON'T WE ALL GET COFFEE OR SOMETHING?!
WE CAN CALL IT A DOUBLE DATE!

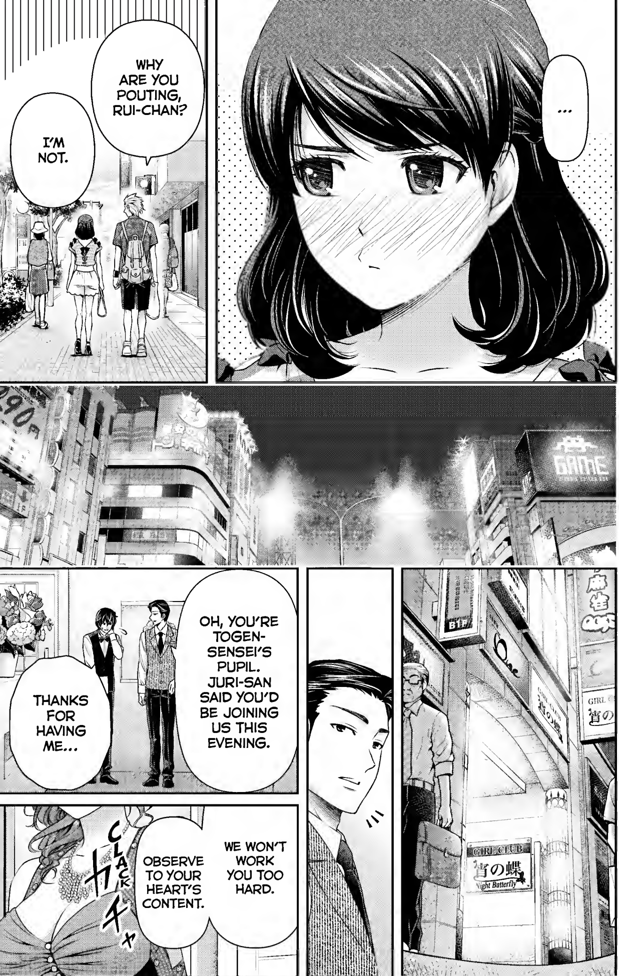

HUH? I'D RATHER NOT.
AWW, C'MON! IT'LL BE FUN!
NO, THANK YOU!
AHH ...
I SEE.
THE HOTEL DISTRICT'S JUST UP AHEAD.
YOU TWO ARE IN A RUSH TO GET THERE, RIGHT?
SORRY TO KEEP YOU!
W-WE'RE NOT GOING TO A HOTEL!
THEN, WHY DON'T YOU JOIN US FOR COFFEE?
...

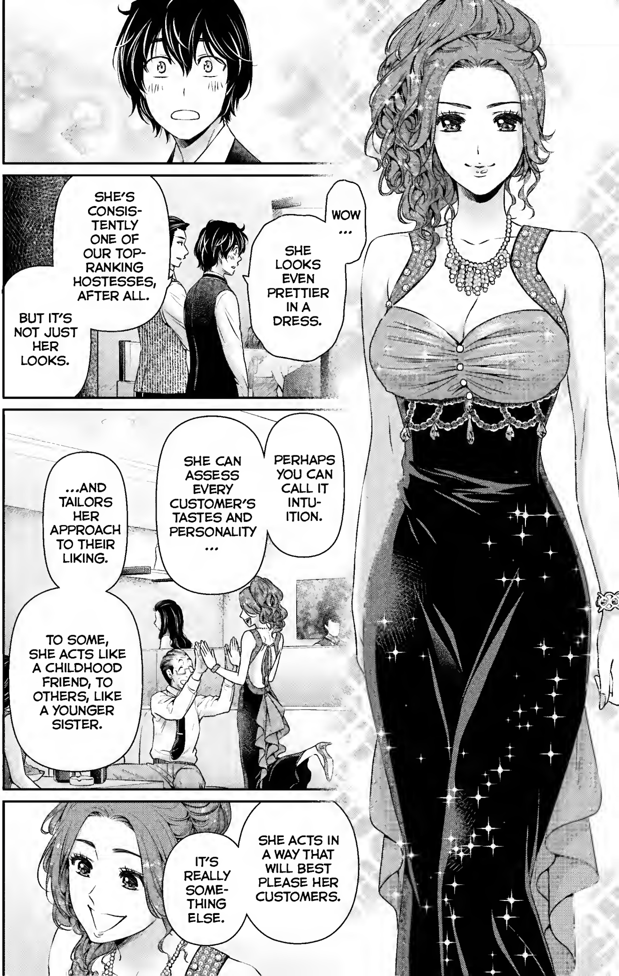

HOW EXCITING. I FEEL LIKE I'M IN HIGH SCHOOL AGAIN! ♪
THE REST OF US ACTUALLY ARE...
HOW OLD ARE YOU, MISS?
CALL ME JURI. ♥
I'M 18 IF YOU TAKE OFF 10 YEARS.
THAT'S AN AMERICAN FOR YOU ...
Oh! WE'RE THE SAME AGE!
PLUS 10 YEARS, SO SHE'S 28, AL...
ARE YOU TWO GOING OUT?
HUH?
UHH ...
NO, WE AREN'T.
I SEE. NOT YET, HUH?
AHH, YOUTH.
OH!
OUR ORDER'S HERE!
THIS TART IS SOOO GOOD. ♪
HERE.
SAY AHH.

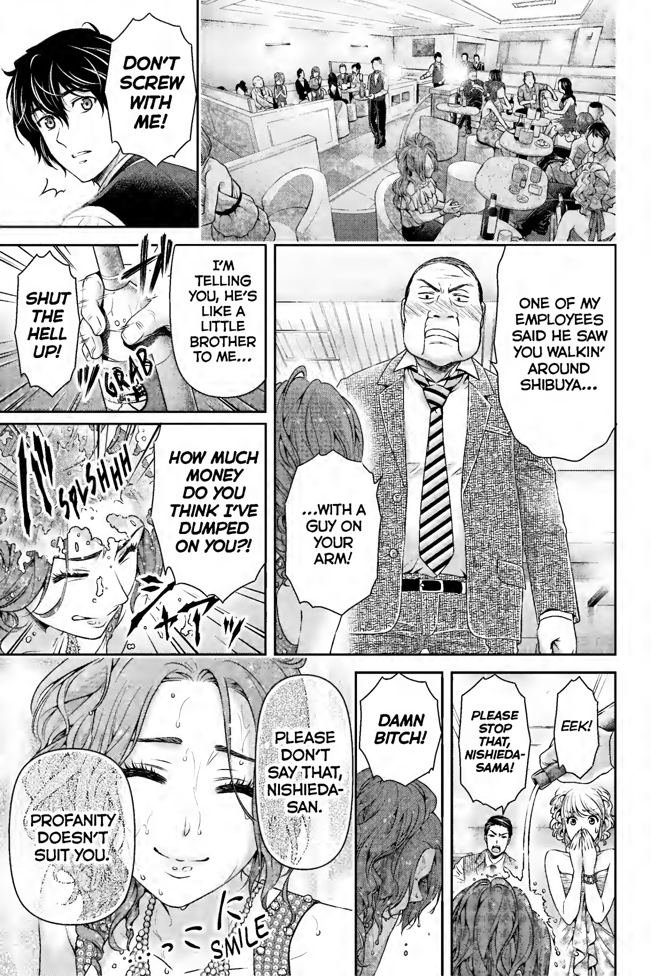

HEY ...!
AHH. ♥
I CAN FEED MYSELF ...
DON'T BE LIKE THAT.
SWIF
WHAT'S THE PROB-LEM?
WE SPENT THE NIGHT IN THE SAME BED, AFTER ALL.
ERR ... THE SAME BED?!
...!
I-IT'S NOT WHAT IT SOUNDS LIKE!
OH, I'D SAY IT'S EXACTLY WHAT IT SOUNDS LIKE.
DID YOU MAKE LOVE WITH JURI-SAN, NAT-CHAN ?!
GRSH
DAMN IT, AL. DON'T SAY THA–

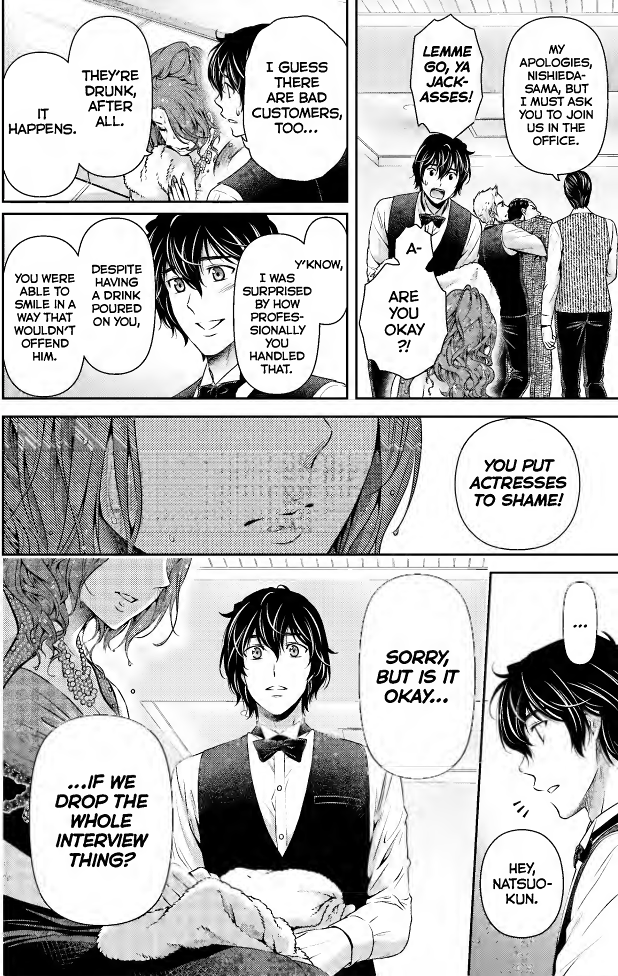

COULD YOU PLEASE ...
...KEEP IT DOWN ?!
S-
SURE ...
THAT WILL BE 2840 YEN*, PLEASE.
THANK YOU FOR COMING!
たた
TAP TAP
DON'T WORRY, THERE'S REALLY NOTHING BETWEEN NATSUO-KUN AND ME.
!
SORRY, YOU'RE JUST SO EASY TO READ.
I COULDN'T HELP BUT TEASE YOU A LITTLE.
MUST BE ROUGH BEING A STEP-SISTER!
TOODLES!

*APPROX. 28 USD.

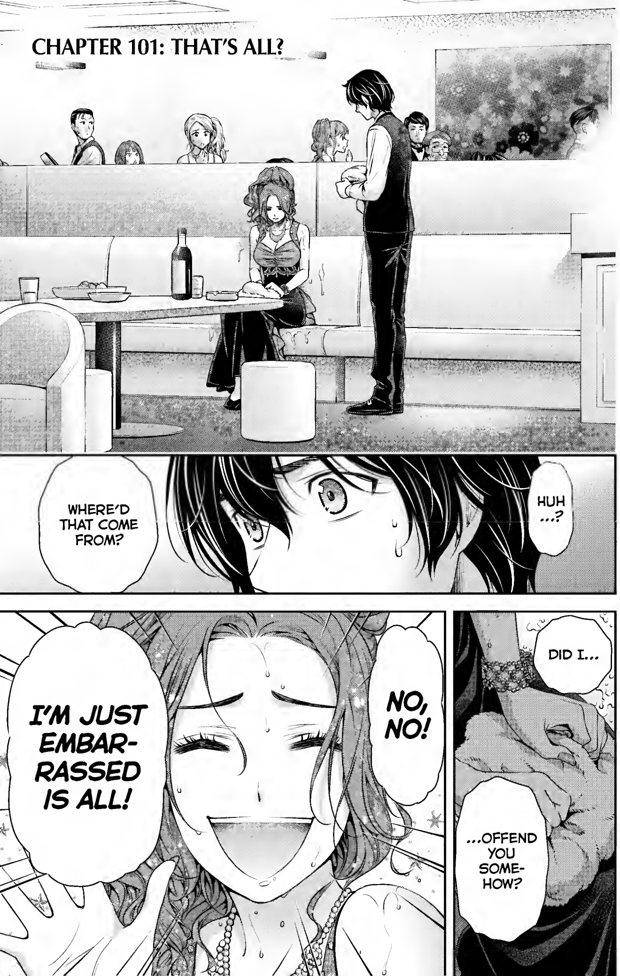

...
WHY ARE YOU POUTING, RUI-CHAN?
I'M NOT.
290円
GAME
麻雀
B1F
GIRL CLUB
宵の蝶
Night Butterfly
OH, YOU'RE TOGEN-SENSEI'S PUPIL. JURI-SAN SAID YOU'D BE JOINING US THIS EVENING.
THANKS FOR HAVING ME...
WE WON'T WORK YOU TOO HARD.
OBSERVE TO YOUR HEART'S CONTENT.
CLACK
カチャ

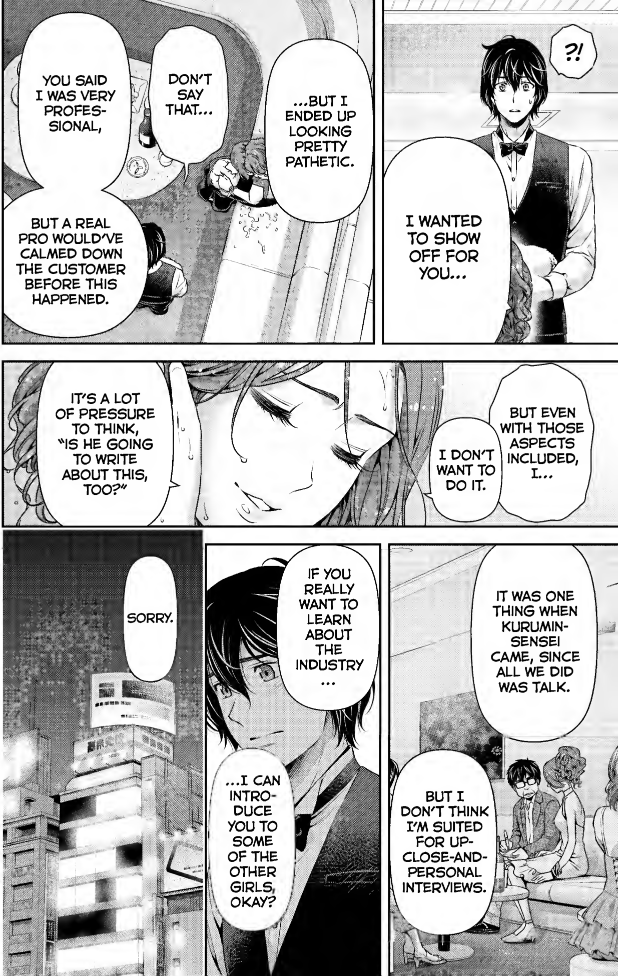

WOW...
SHE LOOKS EVEN PRETTIER IN A DRESS.
SHE'S CONSISTENTLY ONE OF OUR TOP-RANKING HOSTESSES, AFTER ALL.
BUT IT'S NOT JUST HER LOOKS.
PERHAPS YOU CAN CALL IT INTUITION.
SHE CAN ASSESS EVERY CUSTOMER'S TASTES AND PERSONALITY...
...AND TAILORS HER APPROACH TO THEIR LIKING.
TO SOME, SHE ACTS LIKE A CHILDHOOD FRIEND, TO OTHERS, LIKE A YOUNGER SISTER.
SHE ACTS IN A WAY THAT WILL BEST PLEASE HER CUSTOMERS.
IT'S REALLY SOMETHING ELSE.

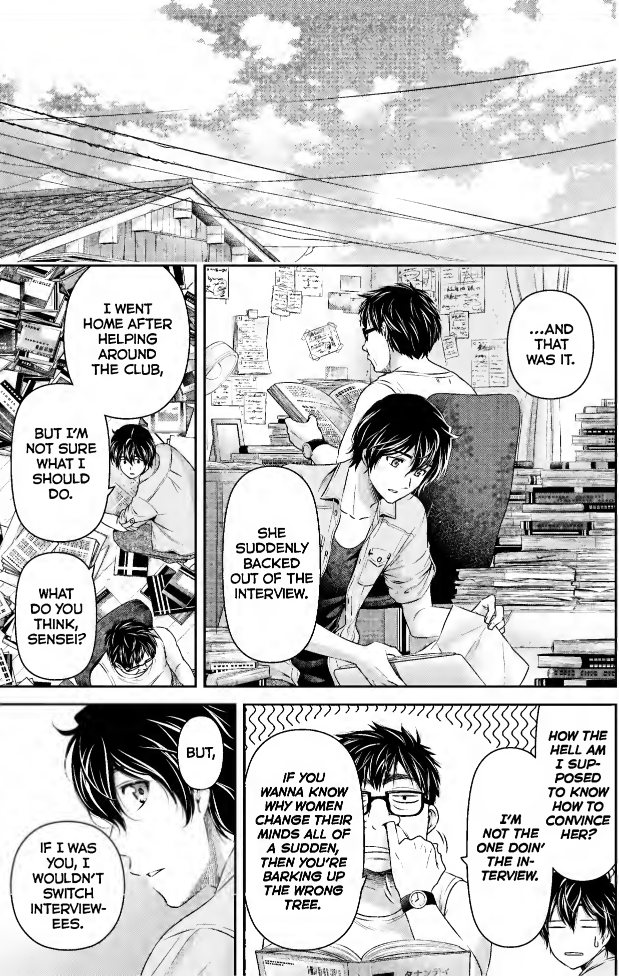

DON'T SCREW WITH ME!
ONE OF MY EMPLOYEES SAID HE SAW YOU WALKIN' AROUND SHIBUYA...
...WITH A GUY ON YOUR ARM!
I'M TELLING YOU, HE'S LIKE A LITTLE BROTHER TO ME...
SHUT THE HELL UP!
GRAB
HOW MUCH MONEY DO YOU THINK I'VE DUMPED ON YOU?!
SPLSHHH
EEK!
PLEASE STOP THAT, NISHIEDA-SAMA!
DAMN BITCH!
PLEASE DON'T SAY THAT, NISHIEDA-SAN.
PROFANITY DOESN'T SUIT YOU.
SMILE

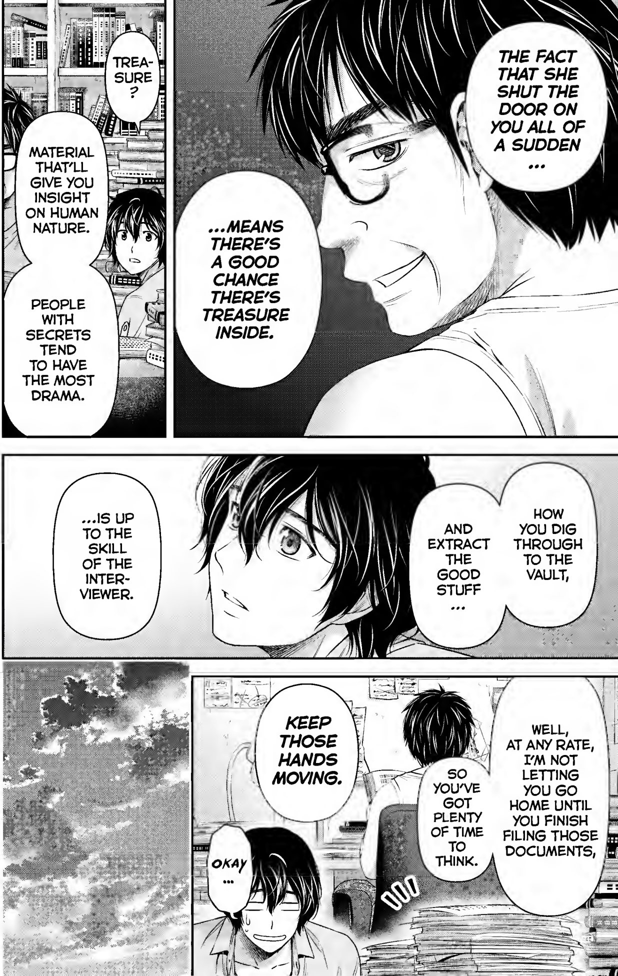

MY APOLOGIES, NISHIEDA-SAMA, BUT I MUST ASK YOU TO JOIN US IN THE OFFICE.
LEMME GO, YA JACKASSES!
A-
ARE YOU OKAY?!
I GUESS THERE ARE BAD CUSTOMERS, TOO...
THEY'RE DRUNK, AFTER ALL.
IT HAPPENS.
Y'KNOW, I WAS SURPRISED BY HOW PROFESSIONALLY YOU HANDLED THAT.
DESPITE HAVING A DRINK POURED ON YOU,
YOU WERE ABLE TO SMILE IN A WAY THAT WOULDN'T OFFEND HIM.
YOU PUT ACTRESSES TO SHAME!
...
HEY, NATSUO-KUN.
SORRY, BUT IS IT OKAY...
...IF WE DROP THE WHOLE INTERVIEW THING?

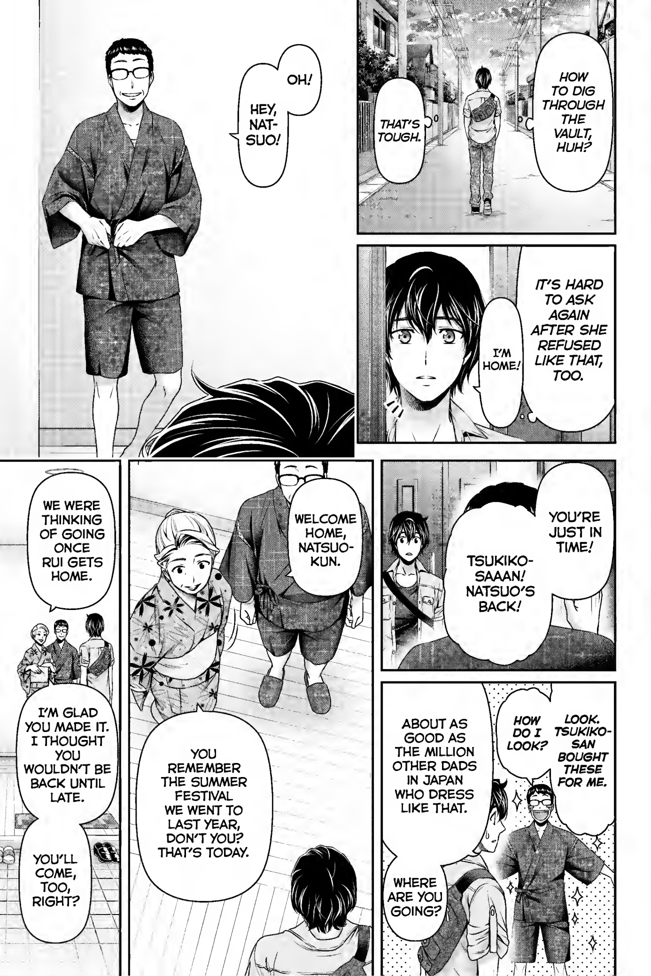
CHAPTER 101: THAT'S ALL?

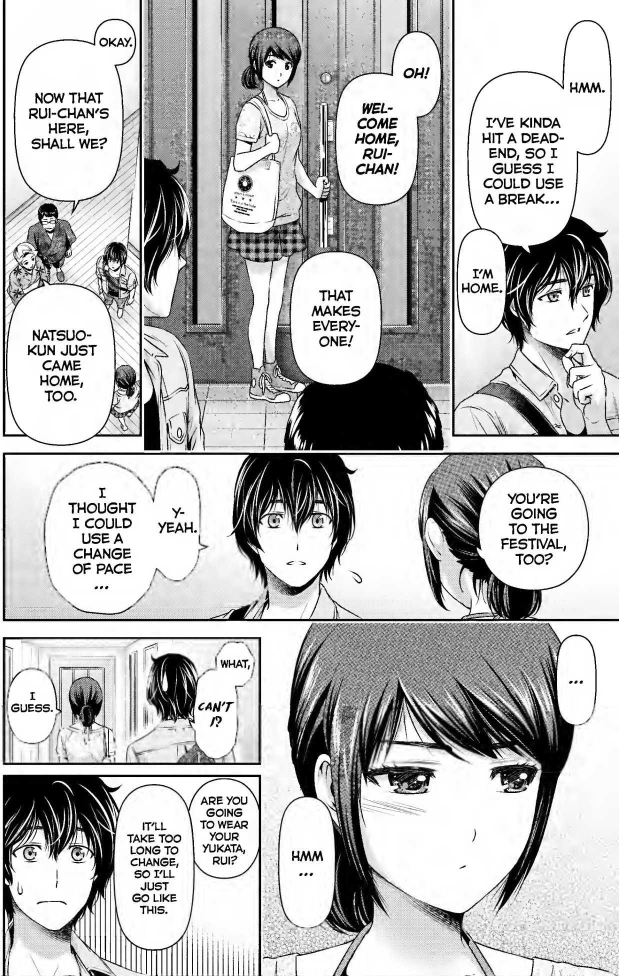

HUH...?
WHERE'D THAT COME FROM?
DID I...
...OFFEND YOU SOMEHOW?
NO, NO!
I'M JUST EMBARRASSED IS ALL!

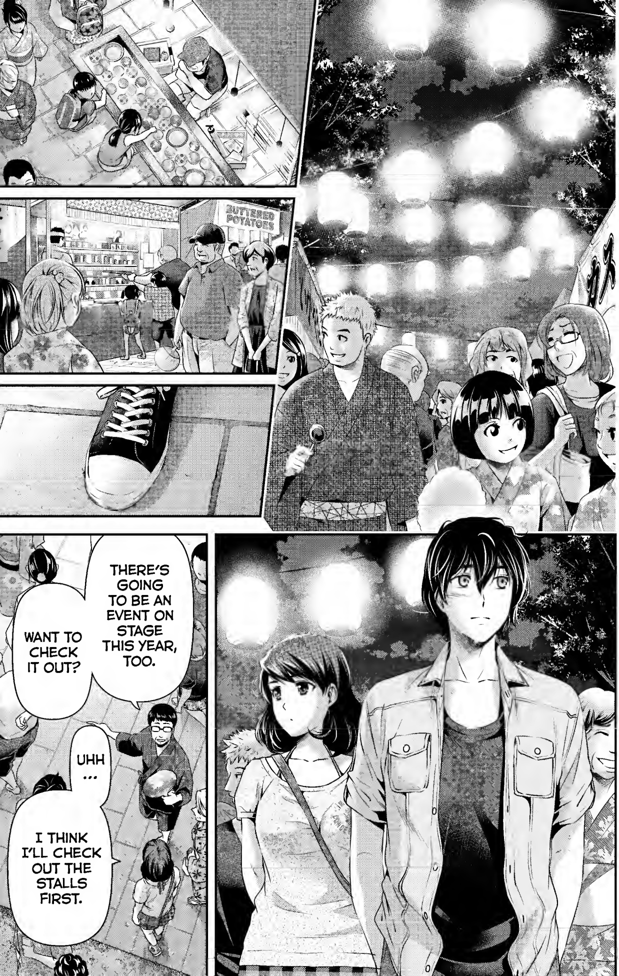

?!
I WANTED TO SHOW OFF FOR YOU...
...BUT I ENDED UP LOOKING PRETTY PATHETIC.
DON'T SAY THAT...
YOU SAID I WAS VERY PROFESSIONAL,
BUT A REAL PRO WOULD'VE CALMED DOWN THE CUSTOMER BEFORE THIS HAPPENED.
BUT EVEN WITH THOSE ASPECTS INCLUDED, I...
I DON'T WANT TO DO IT.
IT'S A LOT OF PRESSURE TO THINK, "IS HE GOING TO WRITE ABOUT THIS, TOO?"
IT WAS ONE THING WHEN KURUMIN-SENSEI CAME, SINCE ALL WE DID WAS TALK.
BUT I DON'T THINK I'M SUITED FOR UP-CLOSE-AND-PERSONAL INTERVIEWS.
IF YOU REALLY WANT TO LEARN ABOUT THE INDUSTRY...
...I CAN INTRODUCE YOU TO SOME OF THE OTHER GIRLS, OKAY?
SORRY.

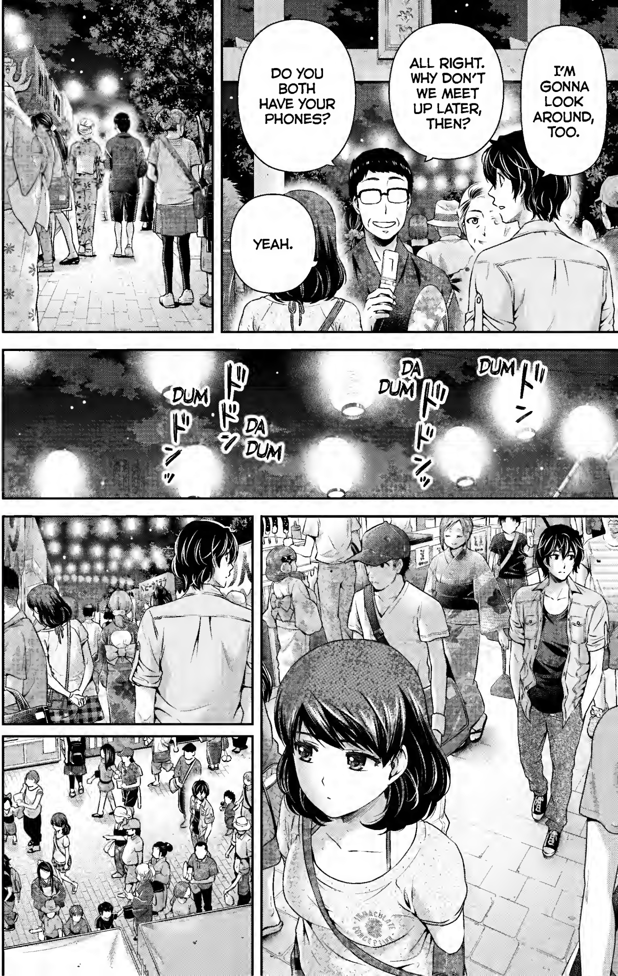

...AND THAT WAS IT.
SHE SUDDENLY BACKED OUT OF THE INTERVIEW.
I WENT HOME AFTER HELPING AROUND THE CLUB,
BUT I'M NOT SURE WHAT I SHOULD DO.
WHAT DO YOU THINK, SENSEI?
HOW THE HELL AM I SUPPOSED TO KNOW HOW TO CONVINCE HER?
I'M NOT THE ONE DOIN' THE INTERVIEW.
IF YOU WANNA KNOW WHY WOMEN CHANGE THEIR MINDS ALL OF A SUDDEN, THEN YOU'RE BARKING UP THE WRONG TREE.
BUT,
IF I WAS YOU, I WOULDN'T SWITCH INTERVIEWEES.

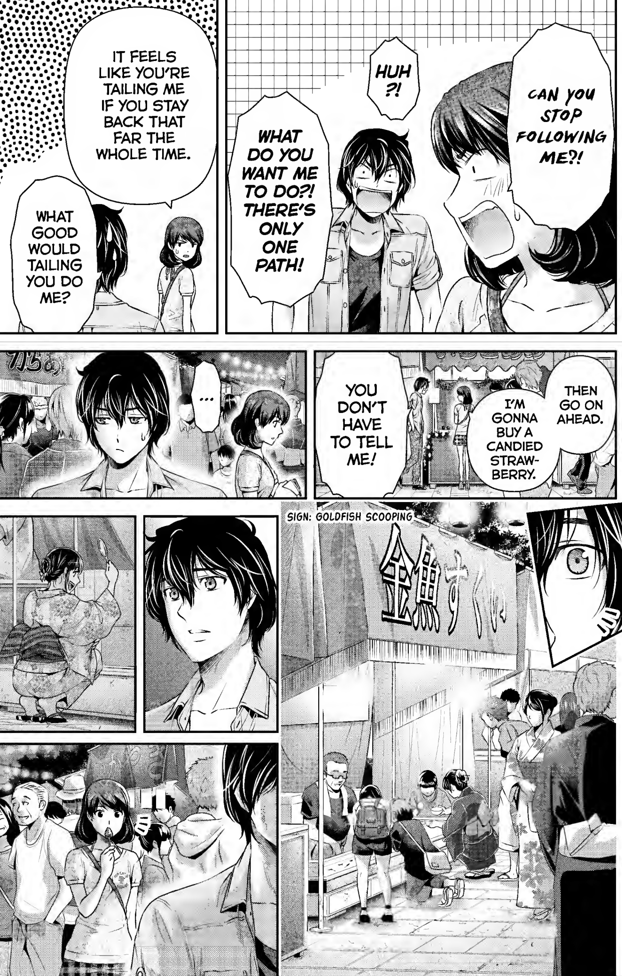

THE FACT THAT SHE SHUT THE DOOR ON YOU ALL OF A SUDDEN…
…MEANS THERE'S A GOOD CHANCE THERE'S TREASURE INSIDE.
TREASURE?
MATERIAL THAT'LL GIVE YOU INSIGHT ON HUMAN NATURE.
PEOPLE WITH SECRETS TEND TO HAVE THE MOST DRAMA.
HOW YOU DIG THROUGH TO THE VAULT,
AND EXTRACT THE GOOD STUFF…
…IS UP TO THE SKILL OF THE INTERVIEWER.
WELL, AT ANY RATE, I'M NOT LETTING YOU GO HOME UNTIL YOU FINISH FILING THOSE DOCUMENTS,
SO YOU'VE GOT PLENTY OF TIME TO THINK.
KEEP THOSE HANDS MOVING.
OKAY…

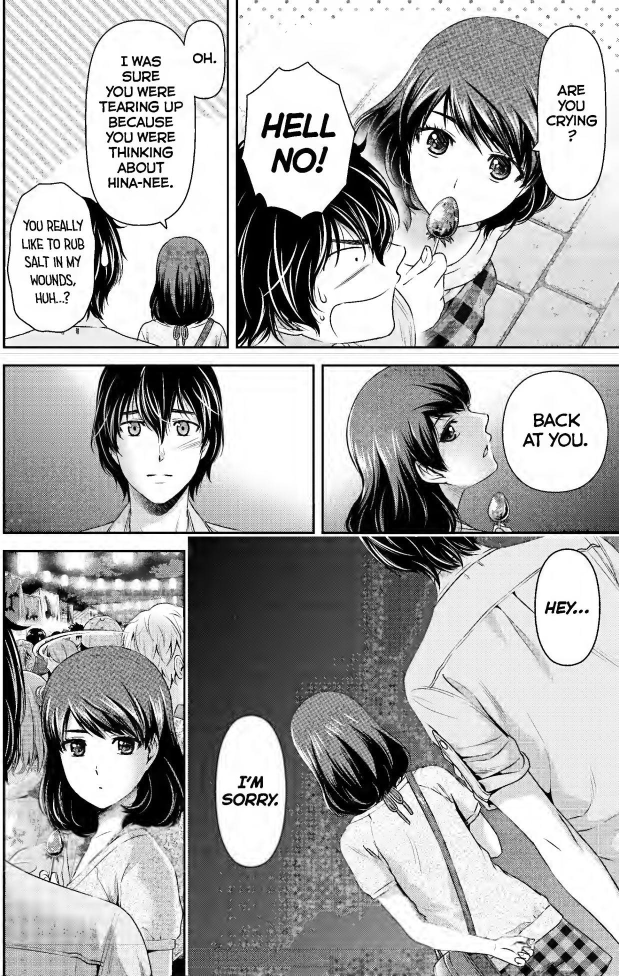

HOW TO DIG THROUGH THE VAULT, HUH?
THAT'S TOUGH.
IT'S HARD TO ASK AGAIN AFTER SHE REFUSED LIKE THAT, TOO.
I'M HOME!
OH!
HEY, NATSUO!
YOU'RE JUST IN TIME!
TSUKIKO-SAAAN! NATSUO'S BACK!
LOOK. TSUKIKO-SAN BOUGHT THESE FOR ME.
HOW DO I LOOK?
ABOUT AS GOOD AS THE MILLION OTHER DADS IN JAPAN WHO DRESS LIKE THAT.
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
WELCOME HOME, NATSUO-KUN.
YOU REMEMBER THE SUMMER FESTIVAL WE WENT TO LAST YEAR, DON'T YOU? THAT'S TODAY.
WE WERE THINKING OF GOING ONCE RUI GETS HOME.
I'M GLAD YOU MADE IT. I THOUGHT YOU WOULDN'T BE BACK UNTIL LATE.
YOU'LL COME, TOO, RIGHT?

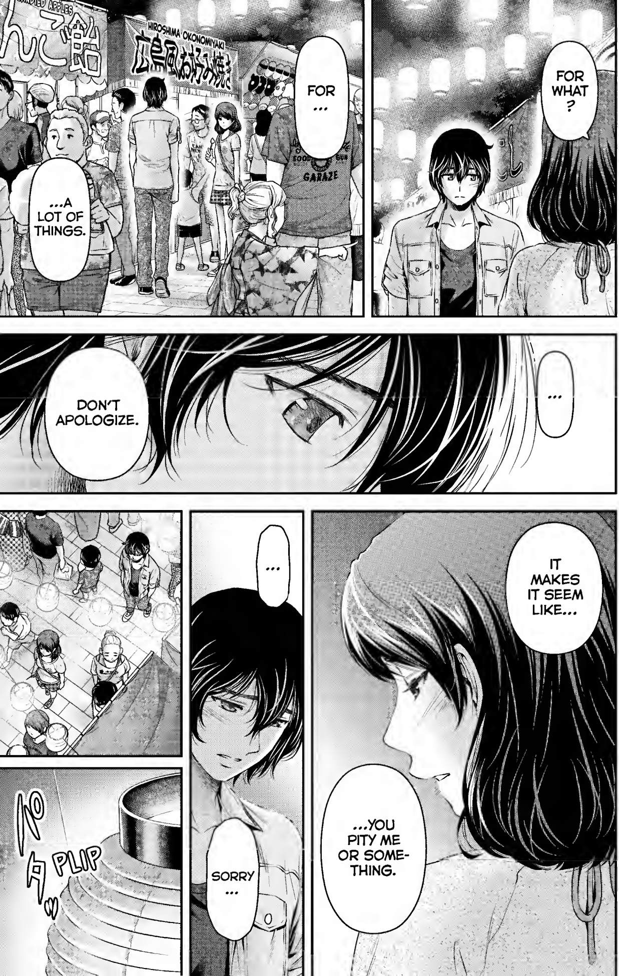

HMM.
I'VE KINDA HIT A DEAD-END, SO I GUESS I COULD USE A BREAK...
I'M HOME.
OH!
WELCOME HOME, RUI-CHAN!
THAT MAKES EVERYONE!
OKAY.
NOW THAT RUI-CHAN'S HERE, SHALL WE?
NATSUO-KUN JUST CAME HOME, TOO.
YOU'RE GOING TO THE FESTIVAL, TOO?
Y-YEAH.
I THOUGHT I COULD USE A CHANGE OF PACE...
...
WHAT, *CAN'T I?*
I GUESS.
ARE YOU GOING TO WEAR YOUR YUKATA, RUI?
HMM...
IT'LL TAKE TOO LONG TO CHANGE, SO I'LL JUST GO LIKE THIS.

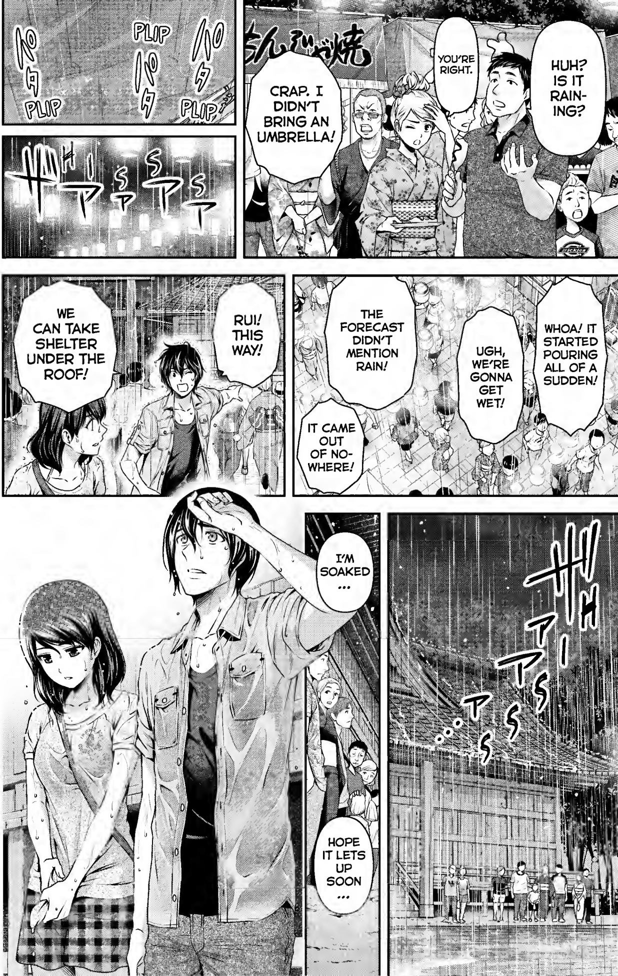

BUTTERED POTATOES
THERE'S GOING TO BE AN EVENT ON STAGE THIS YEAR, TOO.
WANT TO CHECK IT OUT?
UHH ...
I THINK I'LL CHECK OUT THE STALLS FIRST.

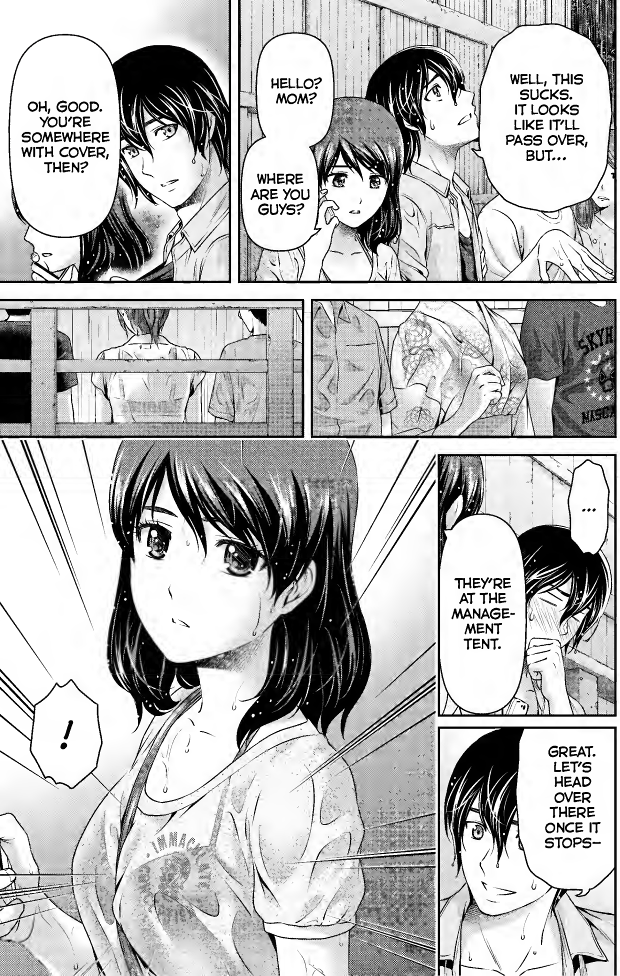

I'M GONNA LOOK AROUND, TOO.
ALL RIGHT. WHY DON'T WE MEET UP LATER, THEN?
DO YOU BOTH HAVE YOUR PHONES?
YEAH.
DUM ドン
DA DUM ドドンッ
DA DUM ドドン
DUM ドンッ

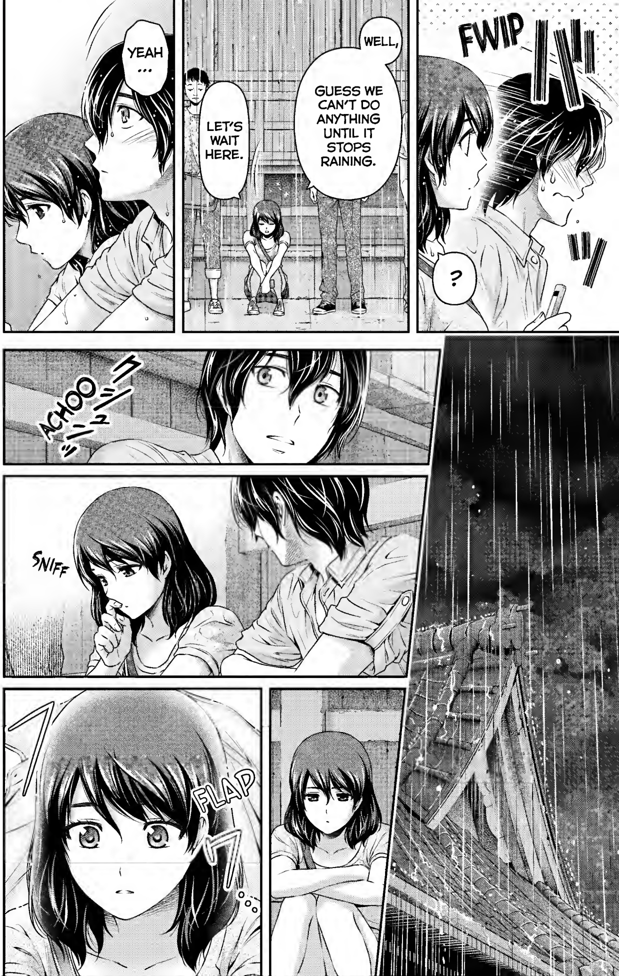

CAN YOU STOP FOLLOWING ME?!
HUH ?!
WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO DO?! THERE'S ONLY ONE PATH!
IT FEELS LIKE YOU'RE TAILING ME IF YOU STAY BACK THAT FAR THE WHOLE TIME.
WHAT GOOD WOULD TAILING YOU DO ME?
THEN GO ON AHEAD.
I'M GONNA BUY A CANDIED STRAWBERRY.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO TELL ME!
...
SIGN: GOLDFISH SCOOPING
金魚すくい

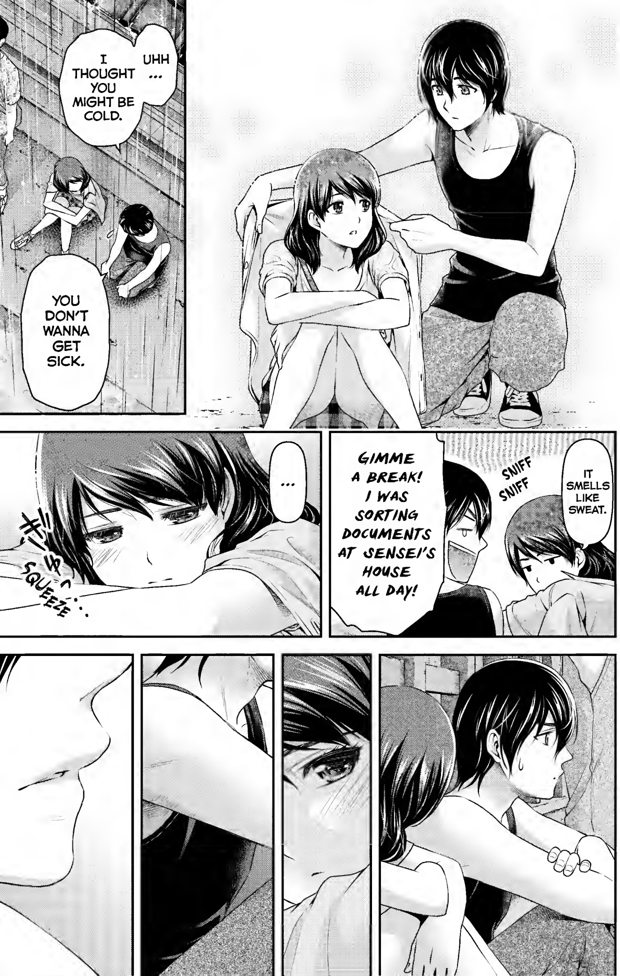

ARE YOU CRYING?
HELL NO!
OH.
I WAS SURE YOU WERE TEARING UP BECAUSE YOU WERE THINKING ABOUT HINA-NEE.
YOU REALLY LIKE TO RUB SALT IN MY WOUNDS, HUH...?
BACK AT YOU.
HEY...
I'M SORRY.

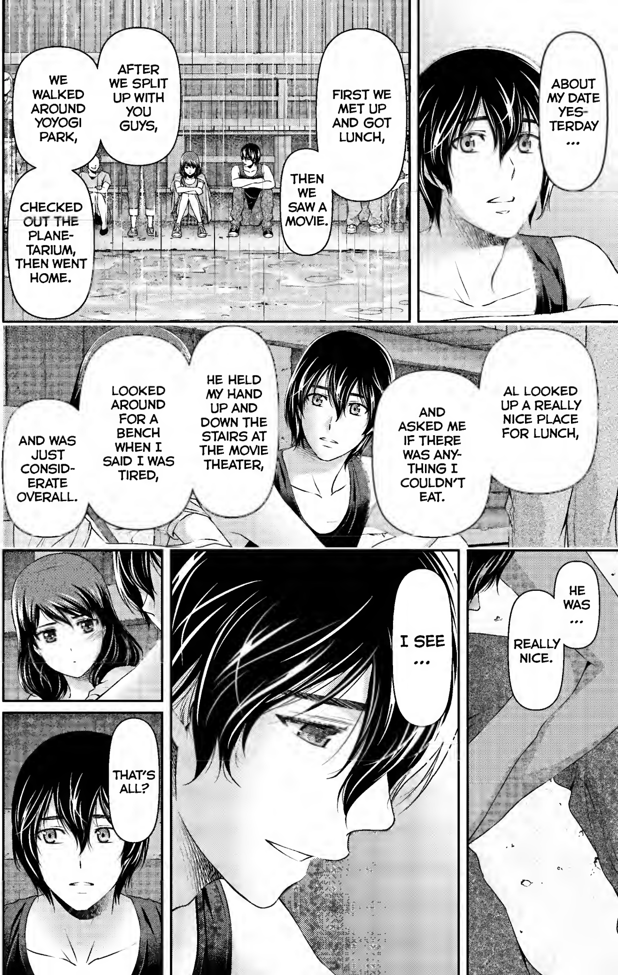

FOR WHAT ?
ANDIED APPLES
んご飴
HIROSHIMA OKONOMIYAKI
広島風お好み焼き
GARAZE
FOR ...
...A LOT OF THINGS.
...
DON'T APOLOGIZE.
IT MAKES IT SEEM LIKE...
...YOU PITY ME OR SOMETHING.
...
SORRY ...
パタ
PLIP

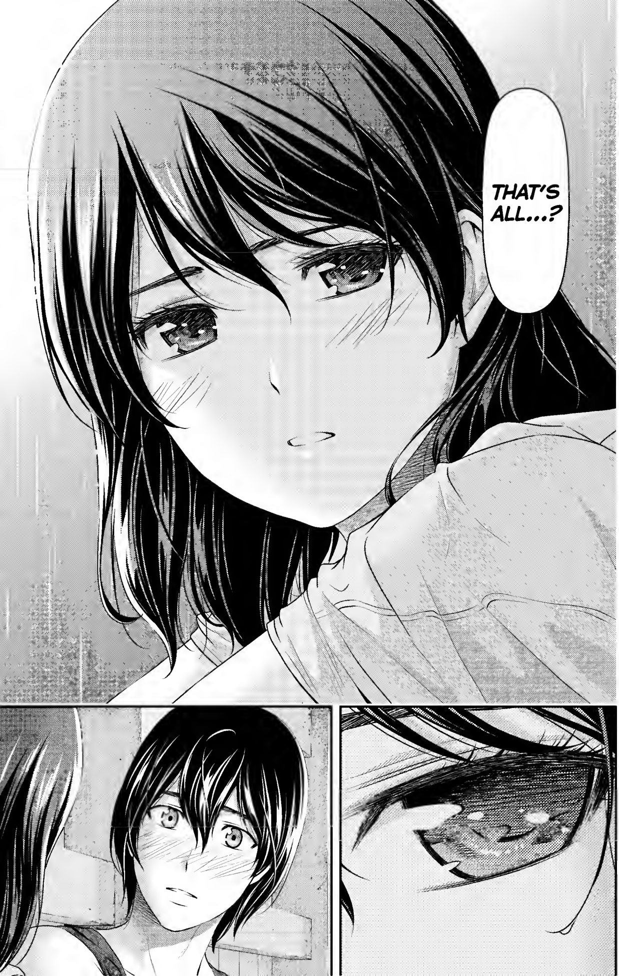

もんじゃ焼
HUH? IS IT RAINING?
YOU'RE RIGHT.
CRAP. I DIDN'T BRING AN UMBRELLA!
パタ PLIP
パタ PLIP
ポタ PLIP
ザァ
WHOA! IT STARTED POURING ALL OF A SUDDEN!
UGH, WE'RE GONNA GET WET!
THE FORECAST DIDN'T MENTION RAIN!
IT CAME OUT OF NO-WHERE!
RUI! THIS WAY!
WE CAN TAKE SHELTER UNDER THE ROOF!
ザァァァ...
I'M SOAKED...
HOPE IT LETS UP SOON...

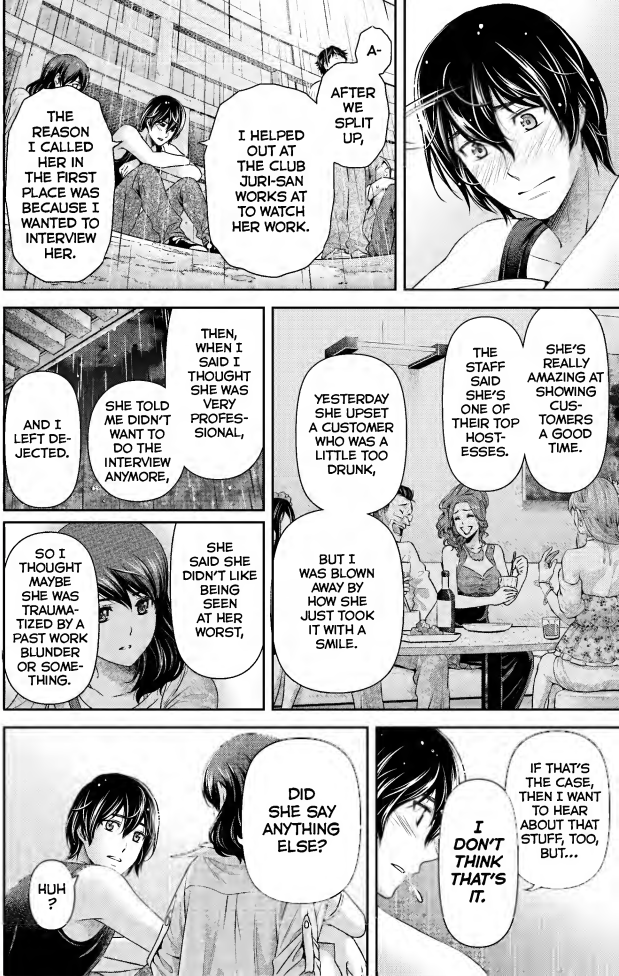

WELL, THIS SUCKS. IT LOOKS LIKE IT'LL PASS OVER, BUT...
HELLO? MOM?
WHERE ARE YOU GUYS?
OH, GOOD. YOU'RE SOMEWHERE WITH COVER, THEN?
...
THEY'RE AT THE MANAGEMENT TENT.
GREAT. LET'S HEAD OVER THERE ONCE IT STOPS–
!

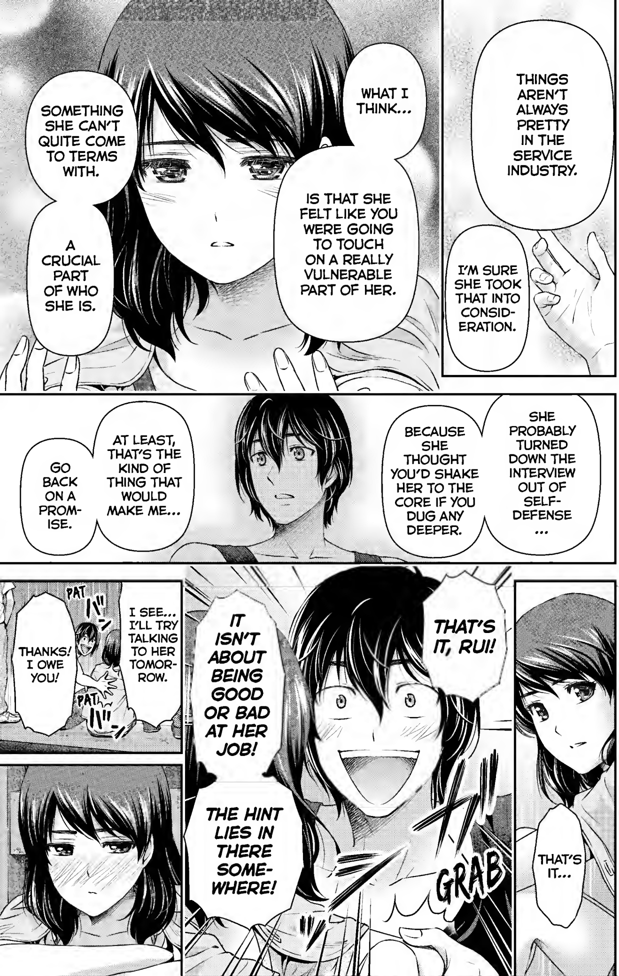

FWIP
?
WELL,
GUESS WE CAN'T DO ANYTHING UNTIL IT STOPS RAINING.
LET'S WAIT HERE.
YEAH ...
ACHOO
SNIFF
FLAP

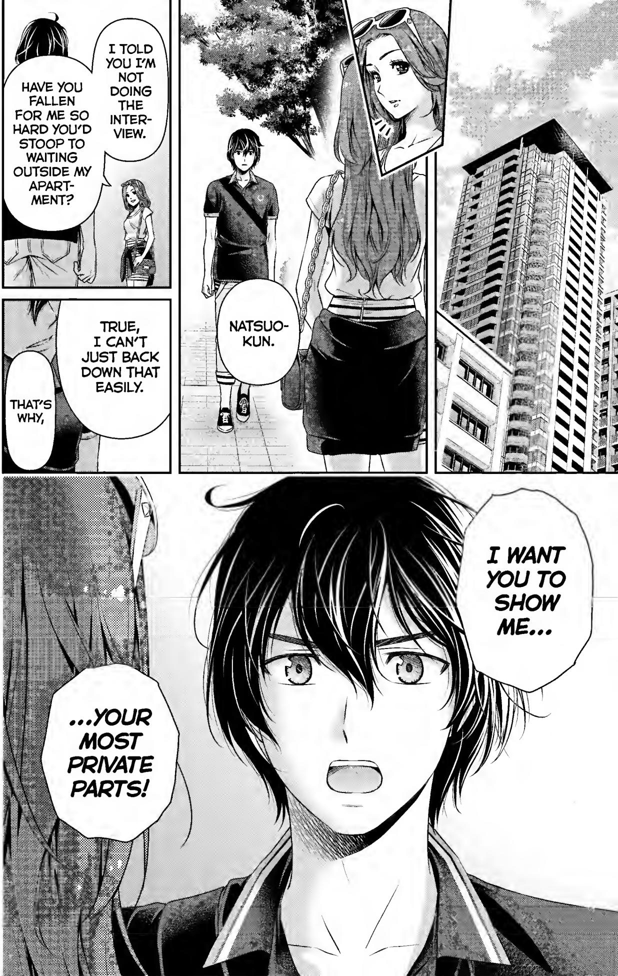

UHH ...
I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT BE COLD.
YOU DON'T WANNA GET SICK.
IT SMELLS LIKE SWEAT.
SNIFF SNIFF
GIMME A BREAK! I WAS SORTING DOCUMENTS AT SENSEI'S HOUSE ALL DAY!
...
ギュッ
SQUEEZE


ABOUT MY DATE YESTERDAY...
FIRST WE MET UP AND GOT LUNCH,
THEN WE SAW A MOVIE.
AFTER WE SPLIT UP WITH YOU GUYS,
WE WALKED AROUND YOYOGI PARK,
CHECKED OUT THE PLANETARIUM, THEN WENT HOME.
AL LOOKED UP A REALLY NICE PLACE FOR LUNCH,
AND ASKED ME IF THERE WAS ANYTHING I COULDN'T EAT.
HE HELD MY HAND UP AND DOWN THE STAIRS AT THE MOVIE THEATER,
LOOKED AROUND FOR A BENCH WHEN I SAID I WAS TIRED,
AND WAS JUST CONSIDERATE OVERALL.
HE WAS...
REALLY NICE.
I SEE...
THAT'S ALL?

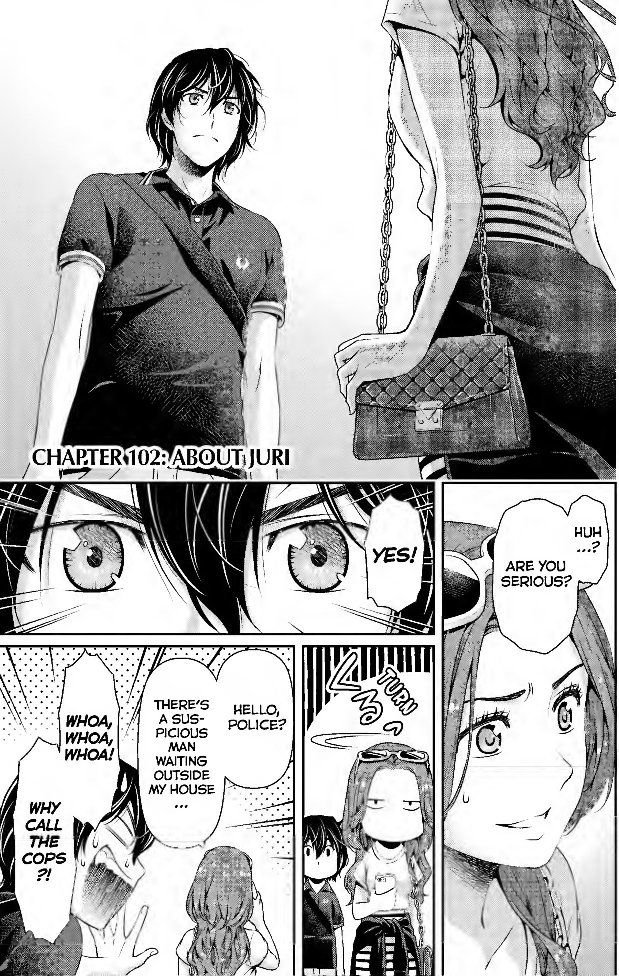

THAT'S ALL...?

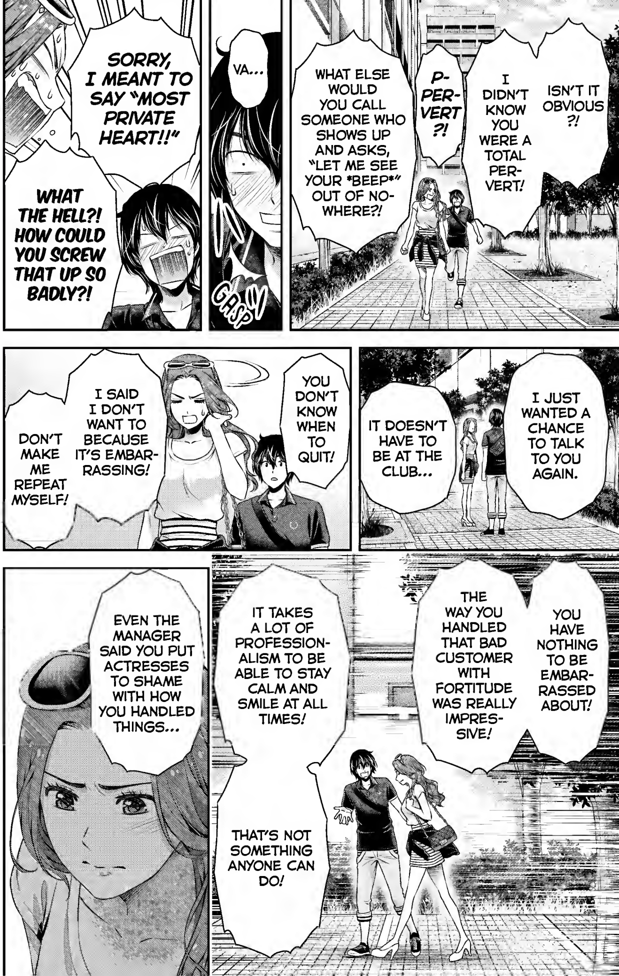

A-
AFTER WE SPLIT UP,
I HELPED OUT AT THE CLUB JURI-SAN WORKS AT TO WATCH HER WORK.
THE REASON I CALLED HER IN THE FIRST PLACE WAS BECAUSE I WANTED TO INTERVIEW HER.
SHE'S REALLY AMAZING AT SHOWING CUSTOMERS A GOOD TIME.
THE STAFF SAID SHE'S ONE OF THEIR TOP HOSTESSES.
YESTERDAY SHE UPSET A CUSTOMER WHO WAS A LITTLE TOO DRUNK,
BUT I WAS BLOWN AWAY BY HOW SHE JUST TOOK IT WITH A SMILE.
THEN, WHEN I SAID I THOUGHT SHE WAS VERY PROFESSIONAL,
SHE TOLD ME DIDN'T WANT TO DO THE INTERVIEW ANYMORE,
AND I LEFT DEJECTED.
SHE SAID SHE DIDN'T LIKE BEING SEEN AT HER WORST,
SO I THOUGHT MAYBE SHE WAS TRAUMATIZED BY A PAST WORK BLUNDER OR SOMETHING.
IF THAT'S THE CASE, THEN I WANT TO HEAR ABOUT THAT STUFF, TOO, BUT...
I DON'T THINK THAT'S IT.
DID SHE SAY ANYTHING ELSE?
HUH?

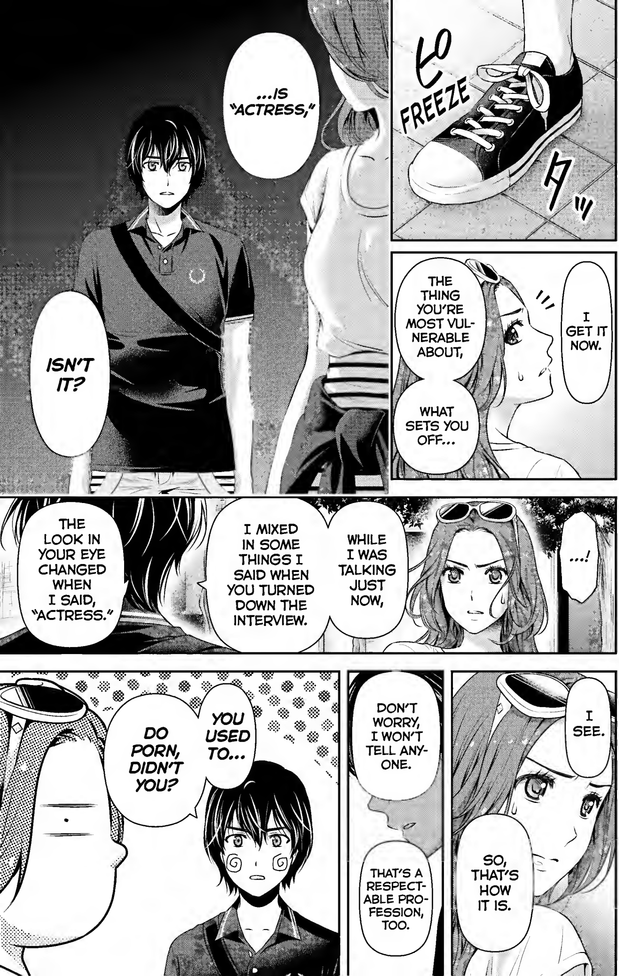

THINGS AREN'T ALWAYS PRETTY IN THE SERVICE INDUSTRY.
I'M SURE SHE TOOK THAT INTO CONSIDERATION.
WHAT I THINK...
IS THAT SHE FELT LIKE YOU WERE GOING TO TOUCH ON A REALLY VULNERABLE PART OF HER.
SOMETHING SHE CAN'T QUITE COME TO TERMS WITH.
A CRUCIAL PART OF WHO SHE IS.
SHE PROBABLY TURNED DOWN THE INTERVIEW OUT OF SELF-DEFENSE...
BECAUSE SHE THOUGHT YOU'D SHAKE HER TO THE CORE IF YOU DUG ANY DEEPER.
AT LEAST, THAT'S THE KIND OF THING THAT WOULD MAKE ME...
GO BACK ON A PROMISE.
THAT'S IT...
THAT'S IT, RUI!
GRAB
IT ISN'T ABOUT BEING GOOD OR BAD AT HER JOB!
THE HINT LIES IN THERE SOMEWHERE!
I SEE... I'LL TRY TALKING TO HER TOMORROW.
THANKS! I OWE YOU!
PAT バン
PAT バン

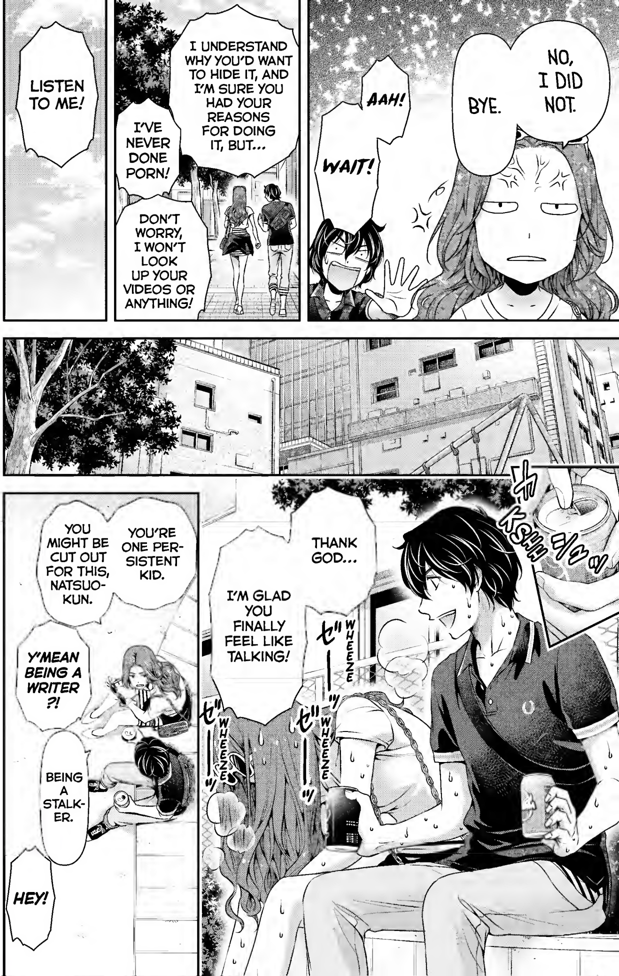

NATSUO-KUN.
I TOLD YOU I'M NOT DOING THE INTERVIEW.
HAVE YOU FALLEN FOR ME SO HARD YOU'D STOOP TO WAITING OUTSIDE MY APARTMENT?
TRUE, I CAN'T JUST BACK DOWN THAT EASILY.
THAT'S WHY,
I WANT YOU TO SHOW ME...
...YOUR MOST PRIVATE PARTS!

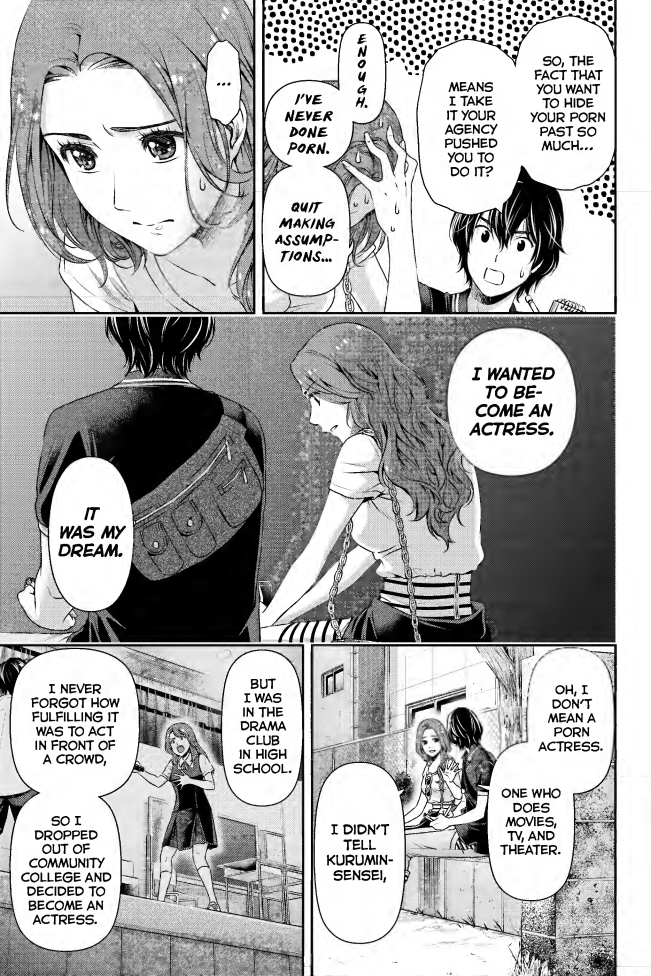
CHAPTER 102: ABOUT JURI

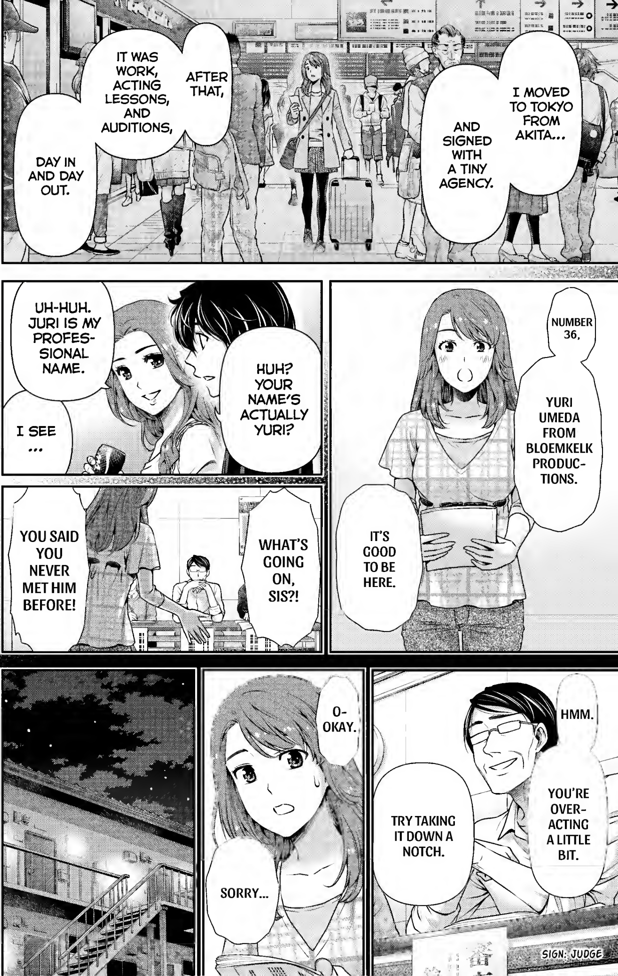

HUH ...? ARE YOU SERIOUS?
YES!
TURN
くるっ
HELLO, POLICE?
THERE'S A SUS-PICIOUS MAN WAITING OUTSIDE MY HOUSE ...
WHOA, WHOA, WHOA!
WHY CALL THE COPS?!

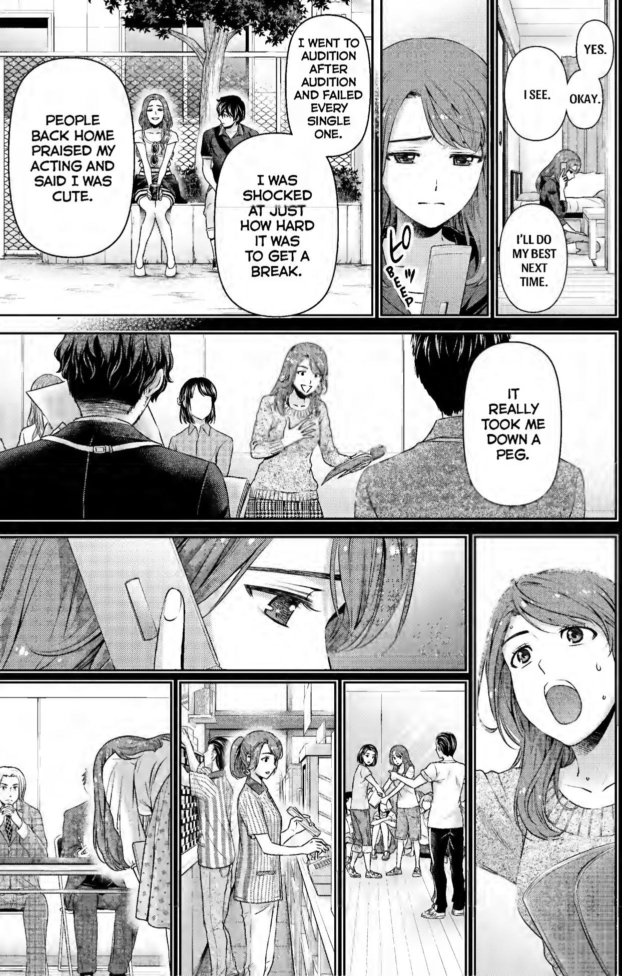

ISN'T IT OBVIOUS?!
I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE A TOTAL PERVERT!
P-PERVERT?!
WHAT ELSE WOULD YOU CALL SOMEONE WHO SHOWS UP AND ASKS, "LET ME SEE YOUR *BEEP*" OUT OF NOWHERE?!
VA...
GASP
SORRY, I MEANT TO SAY "MOST PRIVATE HEART!!"
WHAT THE HELL?! HOW COULD YOU SCREW THAT UP SO BADLY?!
I JUST WANTED A CHANCE TO TALK TO YOU AGAIN.
IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE AT THE CLUB...
YOU DON'T KNOW WHEN TO QUIT!
I SAID I DON'T WANT TO BECAUSE IT'S EMBARRASSING!
DON'T MAKE ME REPEAT MYSELF!
YOU HAVE NOTHING TO BE EMBARRASSED ABOUT!
THE WAY YOU HANDLED THAT BAD CUSTOMER WITH FORTITUDE WAS REALLY IMPRESSIVE!
IT TAKES A LOT OF PROFESSIONALISM TO BE ABLE TO STAY CALM AND SMILE AT ALL TIMES!
THAT'S NOT SOMETHING ANYONE CAN DO!
EVEN THE MANAGER SAID YOU PUT ACTRESSES TO SHAME WITH HOW YOU HANDLED THINGS...

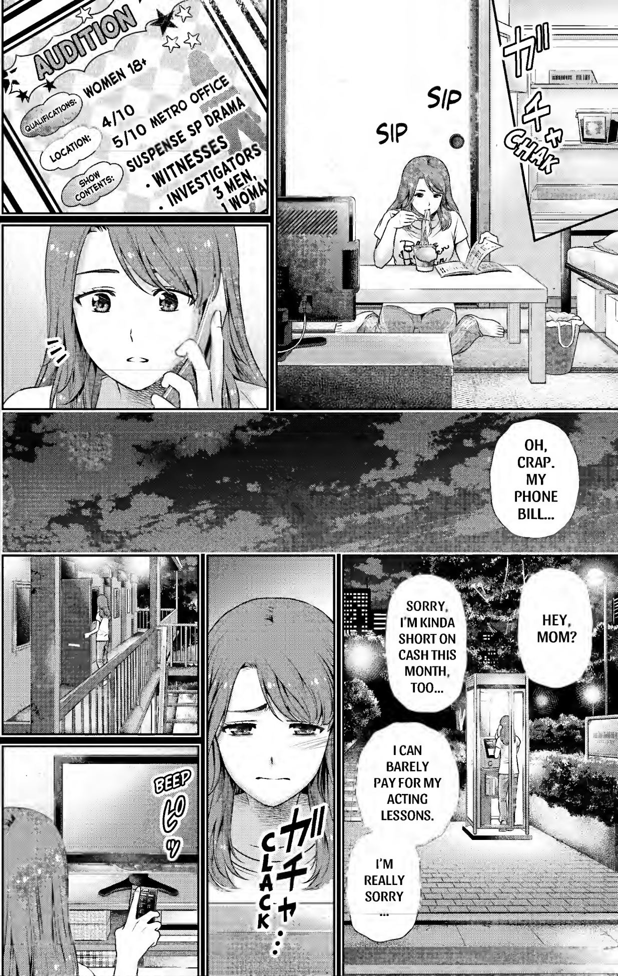

ピ
FREEZE
タッ
I GET IT NOW.
THE THING YOU'RE MOST VULNERABLE ABOUT,
WHAT SETS YOU OFF...
...IS "ACTRESS,"
ISN'T IT?
...!
WHILE I WAS TALKING JUST NOW,
I MIXED IN SOME THINGS I SAID WHEN YOU TURNED DOWN THE INTERVIEW.
THE LOOK IN YOUR EYE CHANGED WHEN I SAID, "ACTRESS."
I SEE.
SO, THAT'S HOW IT IS.
DON'T WORRY, I WON'T TELL ANYONE.
THAT'S A RESPECTABLE PROFESSION, TOO.
YOU USED TO...
DO PORN, DIDN'T YOU?

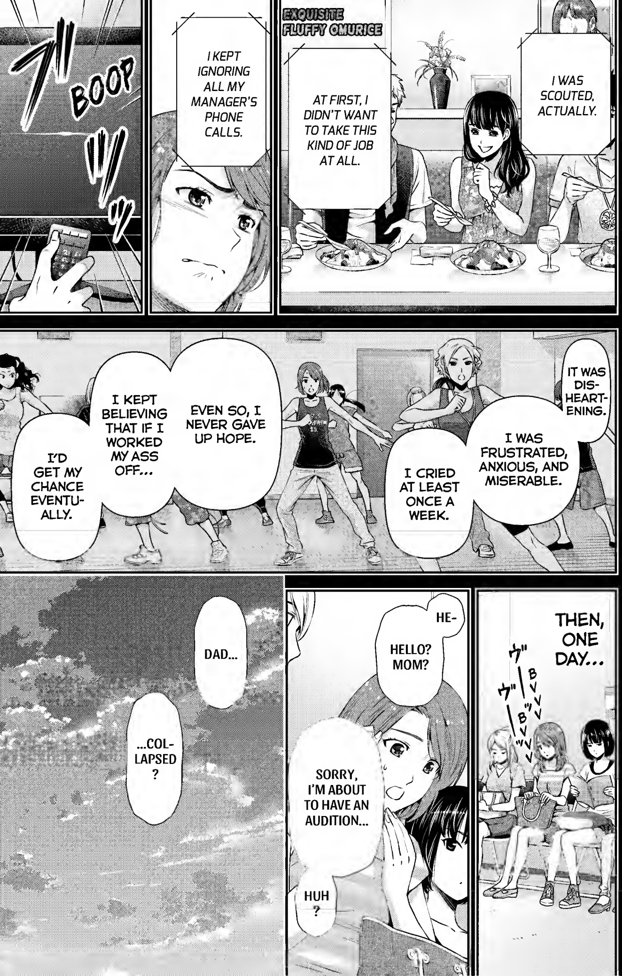

NO, I DID NOT.
BYE.
AAH!
WAIT!
I UNDERSTAND WHY YOU'D WANT TO HIDE IT, AND I'M SURE YOU HAD YOUR REASONS FOR DOING IT, BUT...
I'VE NEVER DONE PORN!
DON'T WORRY, I WON'T LOOK UP YOUR VIDEOS OR ANYTHING!
LISTEN TO ME!
KSHH
THANK GOD...
I'M GLAD YOU FINALLY FEEL LIKE TALKING!
WHEEZE
WHEEZE
WHEEZE
YOU'RE ONE PERSISTENT KID.
YOU MIGHT BE CUT OUT FOR THIS, NATSUO-KUN.
Y'MEAN BEING A WRITER?!
BEING A STALKER.
HEY!

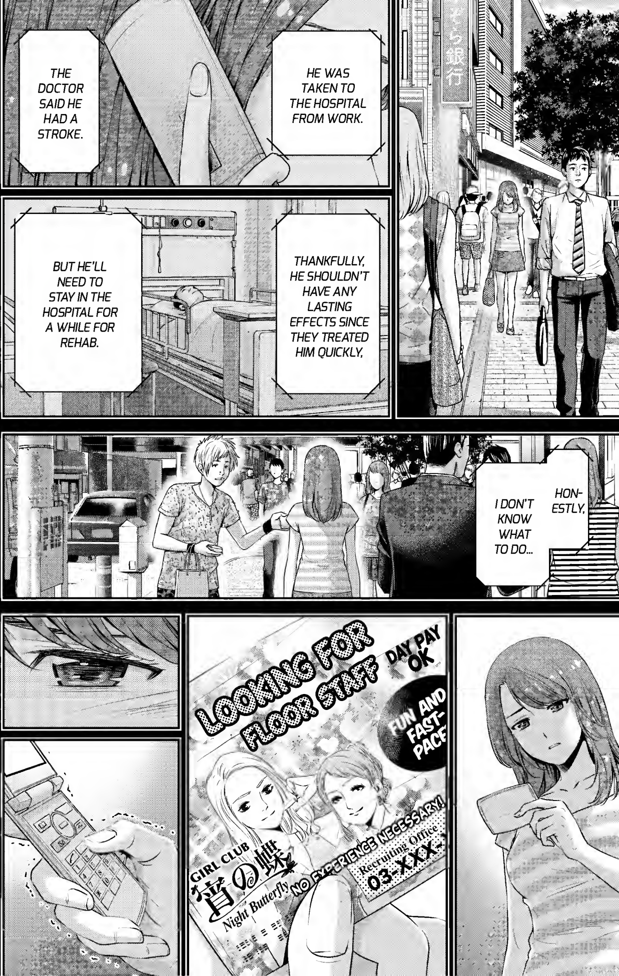

SO, THE FACT THAT YOU WANT TO HIDE YOUR PORN PAST SO MUCH...
MEANS I TAKE IT YOUR AGENCY PUSHED YOU TO DO IT?
ENOUGH.
I'VE NEVER DONE PORN.
QUIT MAKING ASSUMPTIONS...
...
I WANTED TO BECOME AN ACTRESS.
IT WAS MY DREAM.
OH, I DON'T MEAN A PORN ACTRESS.
ONE WHO DOES MOVIES, TV, AND THEATER.
I DIDN'T TELL KURUMIN-SENSEI,
BUT I WAS IN THE DRAMA CLUB IN HIGH SCHOOL.
I NEVER FORGOT HOW FULFILLING IT WAS TO ACT IN FRONT OF A CROWD,
SO I DROPPED OUT OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND DECIDED TO BECOME AN ACTRESS.

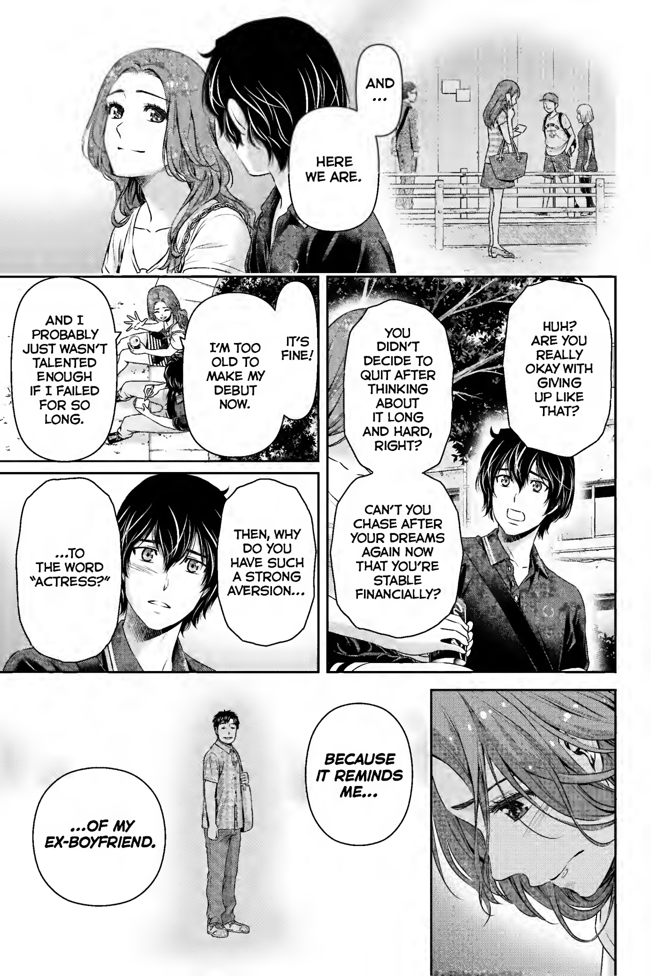

I MOVED TO TOKYO FROM AKITA...
AND SIGNED WITH A TINY AGENCY.
AFTER THAT,
IT WAS WORK, ACTING LESSONS, AND AUDITIONS,
DAY IN AND DAY OUT.
NUMBER 36,
YURI UMEDA FROM BLOEMKELK PRODUCTIONS.
IT'S GOOD TO BE HERE.
HUH? YOUR NAME'S ACTUALLY YURI?
UH-HUH. JURI IS MY PROFESSIONAL NAME.
I SEE ...
WHAT'S GOING ON, SIS?!
YOU SAID YOU NEVER MET HIM BEFORE!
HMM.
YOU'RE OVER-ACTING A LITTLE BIT.
TRY TAKING IT DOWN A NOTCH.
SIGN: JUDGE
O-OKAY.
SORRY...

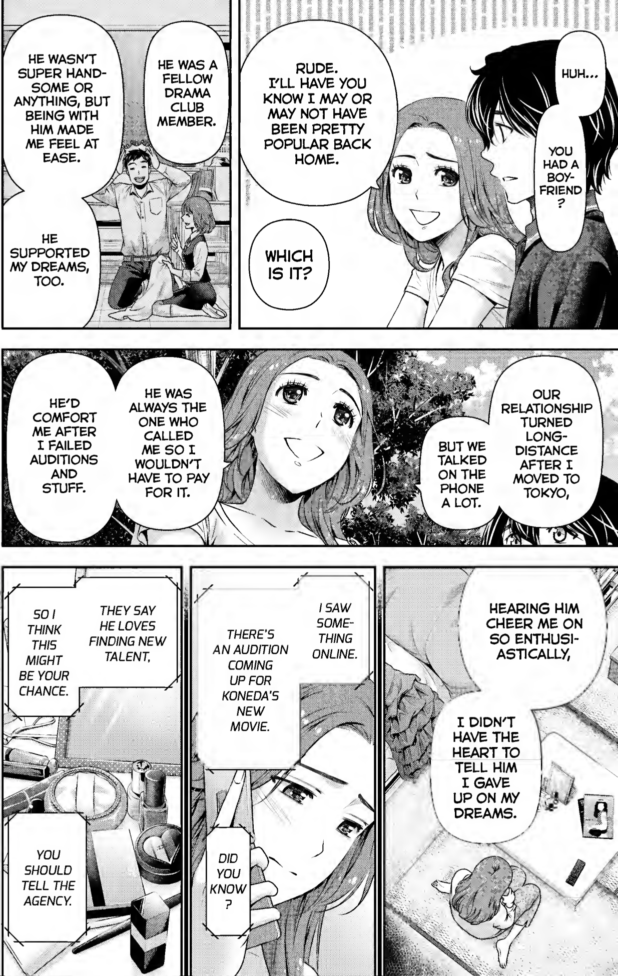

YES.
I SEE.
OKAY.
I'LL DO MY BEST NEXT TIME.
ピッ
BEEP
I WENT TO AUDITION AFTER AUDITION AND FAILED EVERY SINGLE ONE.
I WAS SHOCKED AT JUST HOW HARD IT WAS TO GET A BREAK.
PEOPLE BACK HOME PRAISED MY ACTING AND SAID I WAS CUTE.
IT REALLY TOOK ME DOWN A PEG.

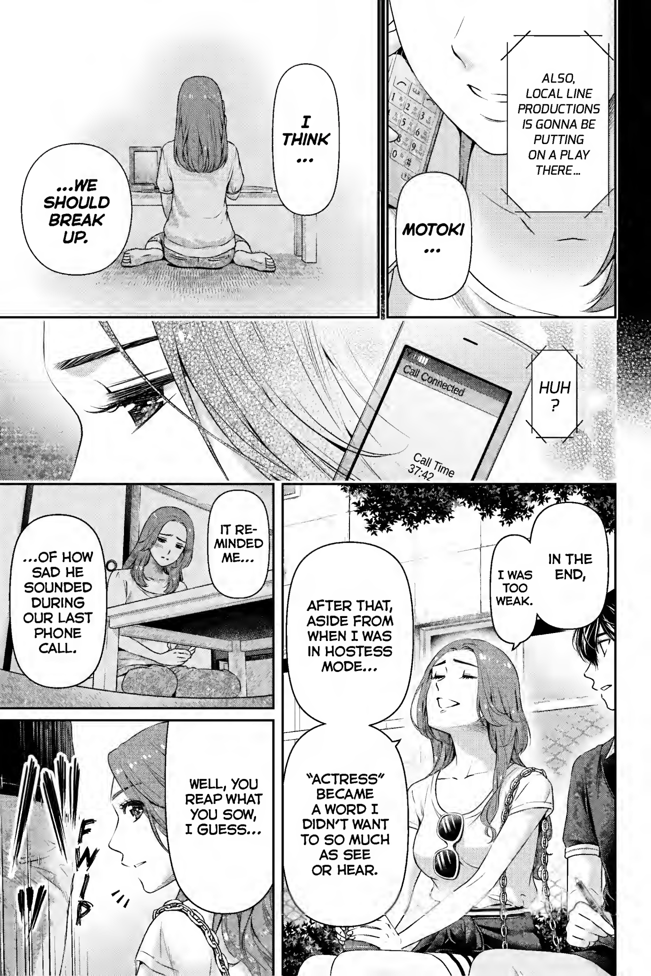

SIP
SIP
ガチャ
CHAK
AUDITION
QUALIFICATIONS: WOMEN 18+
LOCATION: 4/10
5/10 METRO OFFICE
SHOW CONTENTS: SUSPENSE SP DRAMA
· WITNESSES
· INVESTIGATORS
3 MEN, 1 WOMAN
OH, CRAP. MY PHONE BILL...
HEY, MOM?
SORRY, I'M KINDA SHORT ON CASH THIS MONTH, TOO...
I CAN BARELY PAY FOR MY ACTING LESSONS.
I'M REALLY SORRY...
カチャ…
CLACK
BEEP
ピッ

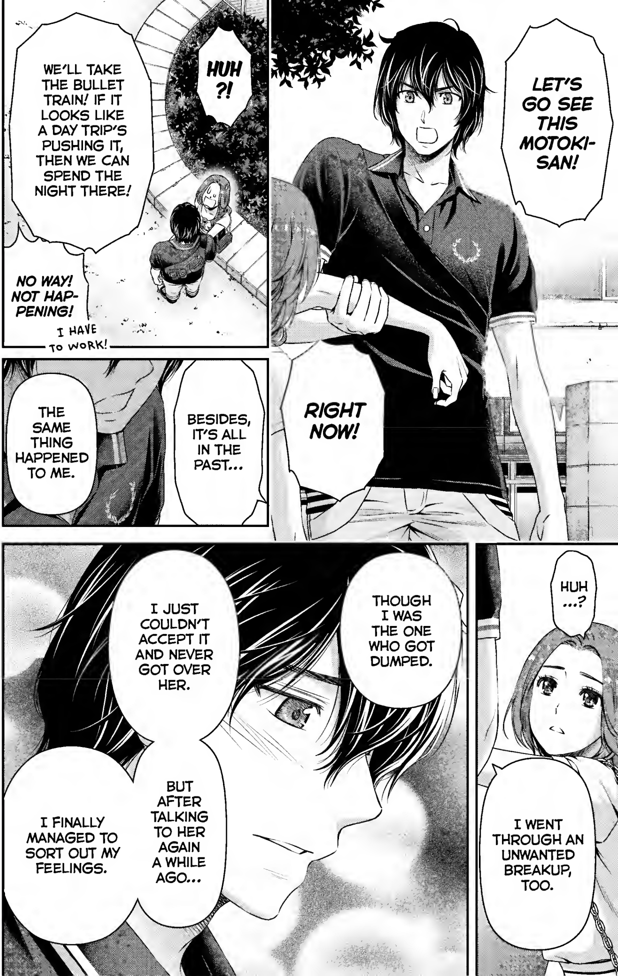

I WAS SCOUTED, ACTUALLY.
EXQUISITE FLUFFY OMURICE
AT FIRST, I DIDN'T WANT TO TAKE THIS KIND OF JOB AT ALL.
I KEPT IGNORING ALL MY MANAGER'S PHONE CALLS.
ブ
BOOP
IT WAS DISHEARTENING.
I WAS FRUSTRATED, ANXIOUS, AND MISERABLE.
I CRIED AT LEAST ONCE A WEEK.
EVEN SO, I NEVER GAVE UP HOPE.
I KEPT BELIEVING THAT IF I WORKED MY ASS OFF...
I'D GET MY CHANCE EVENTUALLY.
THEN, ONE DAY...
ヴー ヴー
BVVV BVVV
HE-
HELLO? MOM?
SORRY, I'M ABOUT TO HAVE AN AUDITION...
HUH?
DAD...
...COLLAPSED?

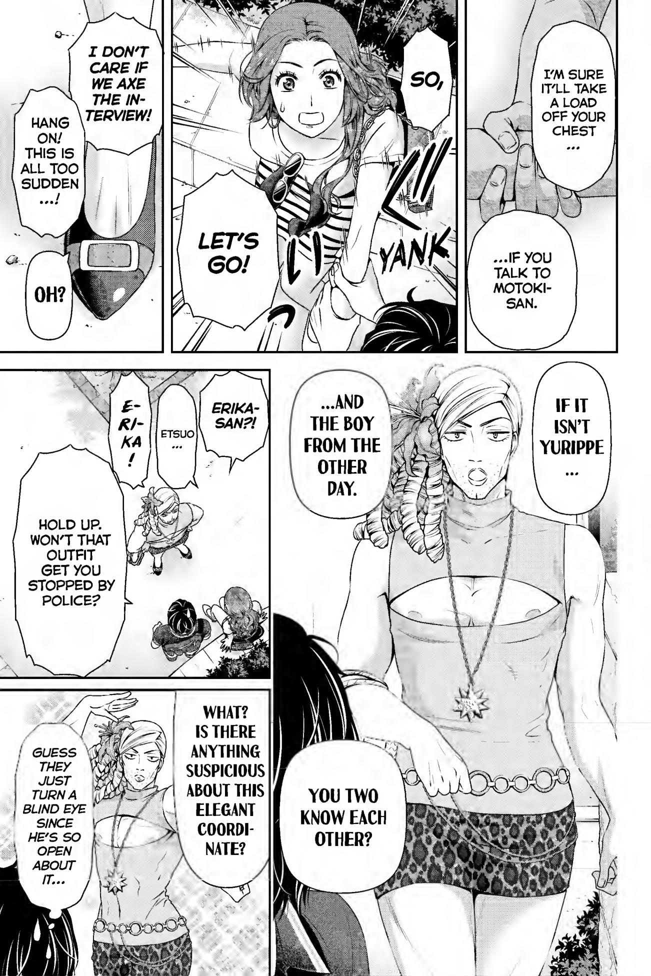

ぞら銀行
HE WAS TAKEN TO THE HOSPITAL FROM WORK.
THE DOCTOR SAID HE HAD A STROKE.
THANKFULLY, HE SHOULDN'T HAVE ANY LASTING EFFECTS SINCE THEY TREATED HIM QUICKLY,
BUT HE'LL NEED TO STAY IN THE HOSPITAL FOR A WHILE FOR REHAB.
HONESTLY,
I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO...
LOOKING FOR FLOOR STAFF
DAY PAY OK
FUN AND FAST-PACE
GIRL CLUB
宵の蝶
Night Butterfly
NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY!
Recruiting Office
03-XXX-

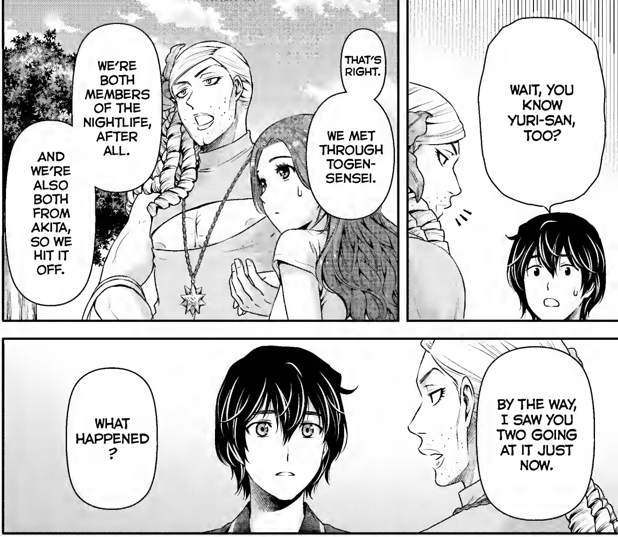

AND…
HERE WE ARE.
HUH? ARE YOU REALLY OKAY WITH GIVING UP LIKE THAT?
YOU DIDN'T DECIDE TO QUIT AFTER THINKING ABOUT IT LONG AND HARD, RIGHT?
CAN'T YOU CHASE AFTER YOUR DREAMS AGAIN NOW THAT YOU'RE STABLE FINANCIALLY?
IT'S FINE!
I'M TOO OLD TO MAKE MY DEBUT NOW.
AND I PROBABLY JUST WASN'T TALENTED ENOUGH IF I FAILED FOR SO LONG.
THEN, WHY DO YOU HAVE SUCH A STRONG AVERSION…
…TO THE WORD "ACTRESS?"
BECAUSE IT REMINDS ME…
…OF MY EX-BOYFRIEND.

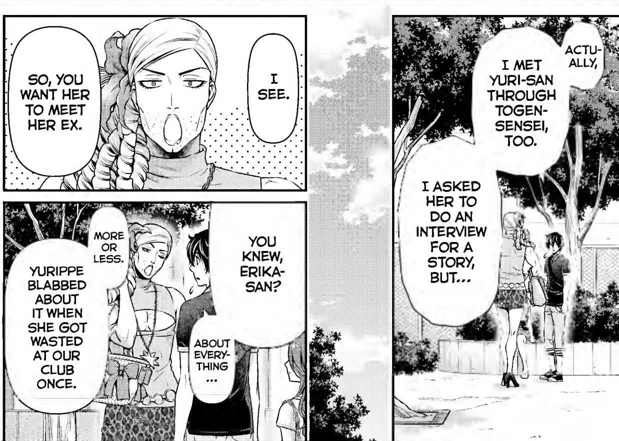

HUH...
YOU HAD A BOYFRIEND?
RUDE. I'LL HAVE YOU KNOW I MAY OR MAY NOT HAVE BEEN PRETTY POPULAR BACK HOME.
WHICH IS IT?
HE WAS A FELLOW DRAMA CLUB MEMBER.
HE WASN'T SUPER HANDSOME OR ANYTHING, BUT BEING WITH HIM MADE ME FEEL AT EASE.
HE SUPPORTED MY DREAMS, TOO.
OUR RELATIONSHIP TURNED LONG-DISTANCE AFTER I MOVED TO TOKYO,
BUT WE TALKED ON THE PHONE A LOT.
HE WAS ALWAYS THE ONE WHO CALLED ME SO I WOULDN'T HAVE TO PAY FOR IT.
HE'D COMFORT ME AFTER I FAILED AUDITIONS AND STUFF.
HEARING HIM CHEER ME ON SO ENTHUSIASTICALLY,
I DIDN'T HAVE THE HEART TO TELL HIM I GAVE UP ON MY DREAMS.
I SAW SOMETHING ONLINE.
THERE'S AN AUDITION COMING UP FOR KONEDA'S NEW MOVIE.
DID YOU KNOW?
THEY SAY HE LOVES FINDING NEW TALENT,
SO I THINK THIS MIGHT BE YOUR CHANCE.
YOU SHOULD TELL THE AGENCY.

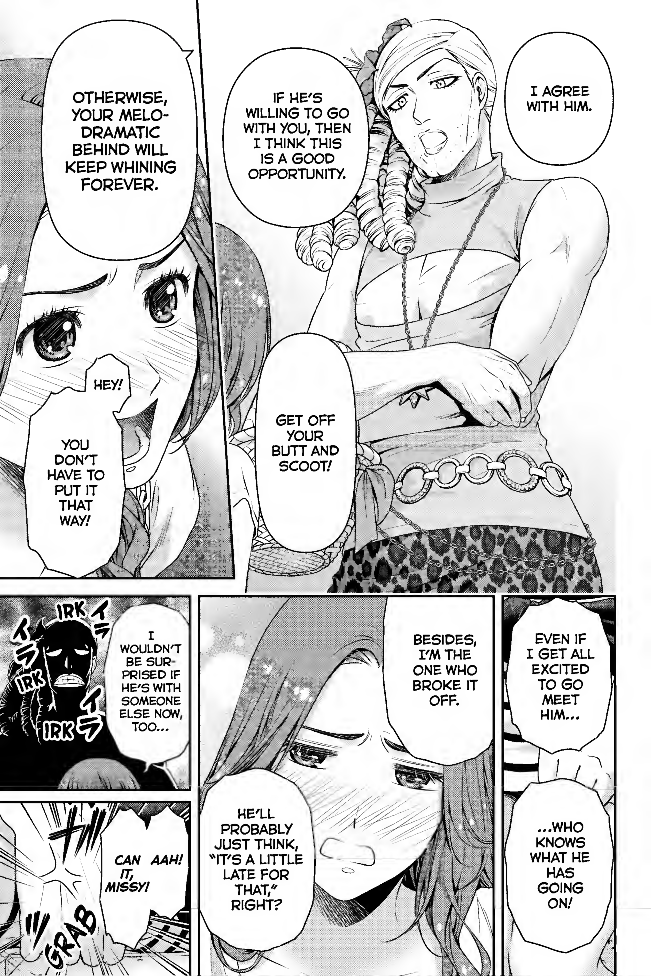

ALSO, LOCAL LINE PRODUCTIONS IS GONNA BE PUTTING ON A PLAY THERE...
MOTOKI...
I THINK...
...WE SHOULD BREAK UP.
HUH?
Call Connected
Call Time 37:42
IT REMINDED ME...
...OF HOW SAD HE SOUNDED DURING OUR LAST PHONE CALL.
IN THE END,
I WAS TOO WEAK.
AFTER THAT, ASIDE FROM WHEN I WAS IN HOSTESS MODE...
"ACTRESS" BECAME A WORD I DIDN'T WANT TO SO MUCH AS SEE OR HEAR.
WELL, YOU REAP WHAT YOU SOW, I GUESS...
FWIP

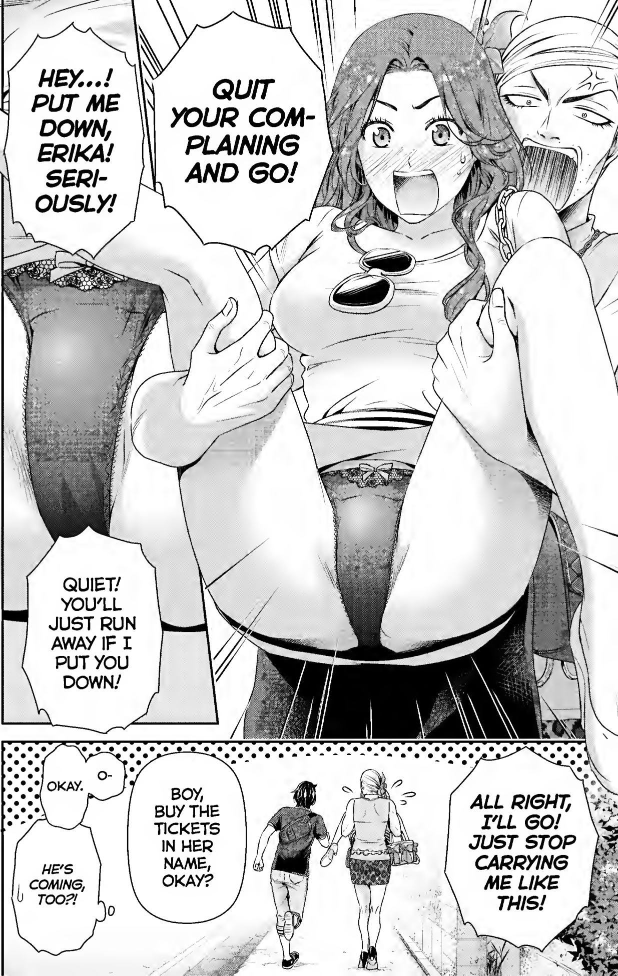

LET'S GO SEE THIS MOTOKI-SAN!
RIGHT NOW!
HUH ?!
WE'LL TAKE THE BULLET TRAIN! IF IT LOOKS LIKE A DAY TRIP'S PUSHING IT, THEN WE CAN SPEND THE NIGHT THERE!
NO WAY! NOT HAPPENING!
I HAVE TO WORK!
BESIDES, IT'S ALL IN THE PAST...
THE SAME THING HAPPENED TO ME.
HUH ...?
I WENT THROUGH AN UNWANTED BREAKUP, TOO.
THOUGH I WAS THE ONE WHO GOT DUMPED.
I JUST COULDN'T ACCEPT IT AND NEVER GOT OVER HER.
BUT AFTER TALKING TO HER AGAIN A WHILE AGO...
I FINALLY MANAGED TO SORT OUT MY FEELINGS.


I'M SURE IT'LL TAKE A LOAD OFF YOUR CHEST...
...IF YOU TALK TO MOTOKI-SAN.
SO,
LET'S GO!
YANK
I DON'T CARE IF WE AXE THE INTERVIEW!
HANG ON! THIS IS ALL TOO SUDDEN...!
OH?
IF IT ISN'T YURIPPE...
...AND THE BOY FROM THE OTHER DAY.
ERIKA-SAN?!
ETSUO...
E-RI-KA!
HOLD UP. WON'T THAT OUTFIT GET YOU STOPPED BY POLICE?
YOU TWO KNOW EACH OTHER?
WHAT? IS THERE ANYTHING SUSPICIOUS ABOUT THIS ELEGANT COORDINATE?
GUESS THEY JUST TURN A BLIND EYE SINCE HE'S SO OPEN ABOUT IT...

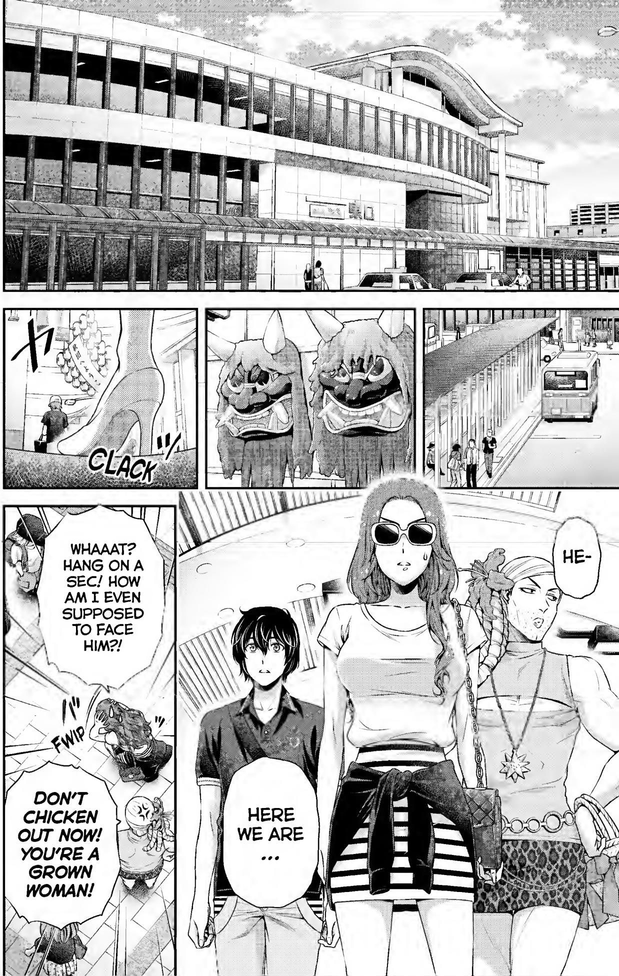

WAIT, YOU KNOW YURI-SAN, TOO?
THAT'S RIGHT.
WE MET THROUGH TOGEN-SENSEI.
WE'RE BOTH MEMBERS OF THE NIGHTLIFE, AFTER ALL.
AND WE'RE ALSO BOTH FROM AKITA, SO WE HIT IT OFF.
BY THE WAY, I SAW YOU TWO GOING AT IT JUST NOW.
WHAT HAPPENED?

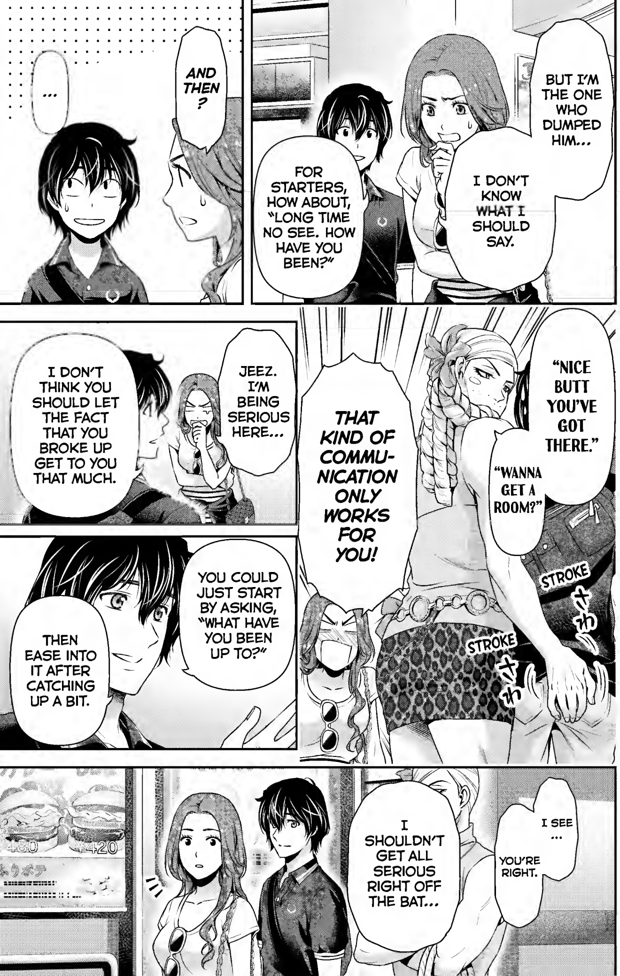

ACTUALLY,
I MET YURI-SAN THROUGH TOGEN-SENSEI, TOO.
I ASKED HER TO DO AN INTERVIEW FOR A STORY, BUT...
I SEE.
SO, YOU WANT HER TO MEET HER EX.
YOU KNEW, ERIKA-SAN?
ABOUT EVERYTHING...
MORE OR LESS.
YURIPPE BLABBED ABOUT IT WHEN SHE GOT WASTED AT OUR CLUB ONCE.

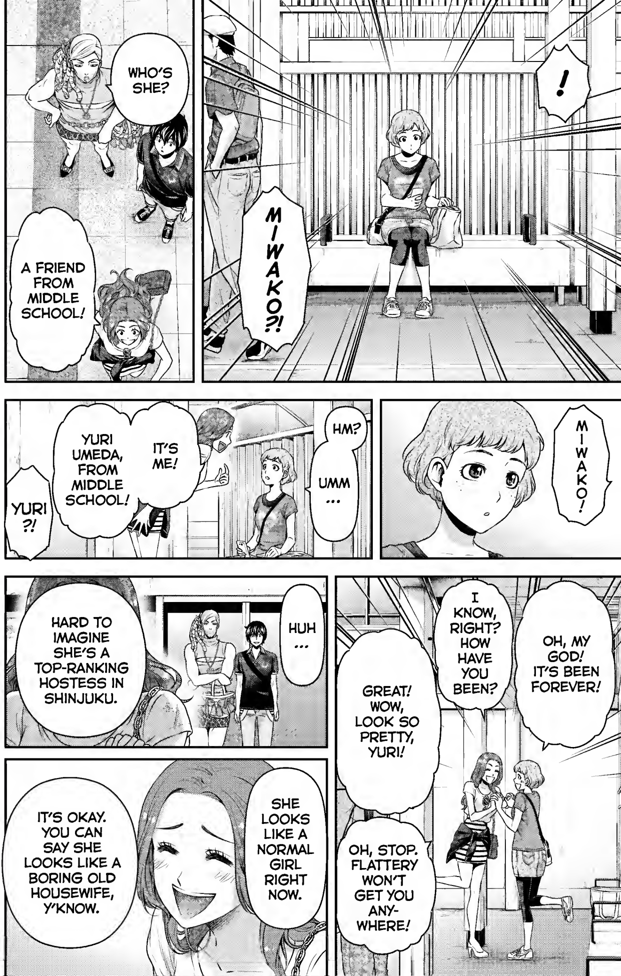

I AGREE WITH HIM.
IF HE'S WILLING TO GO WITH YOU, THEN I THINK THIS IS A GOOD OPPORTUNITY.
OTHERWISE, YOUR MELODRAMATIC BEHIND WILL KEEP WHINING FOREVER.
GET OFF YOUR BUTT AND SCOOT!
HEY!
YOU DON'T HAVE TO PUT IT THAT WAY!
EVEN IF I GET ALL EXCITED TO GO MEET HIM...
...WHO KNOWS WHAT HE HAS GOING ON!
BESIDES, I'M THE ONE WHO BROKE IT OFF.
HE'LL PROBABLY JUST THINK, "IT'S A LITTLE LATE FOR THAT," RIGHT?
IRK
IRK
IRK
I WOULDN'T BE SURPRISED IF HE'S WITH SOMEONE ELSE NOW, TOO...
AAH!
CAN IT, MISSY!
GRAB

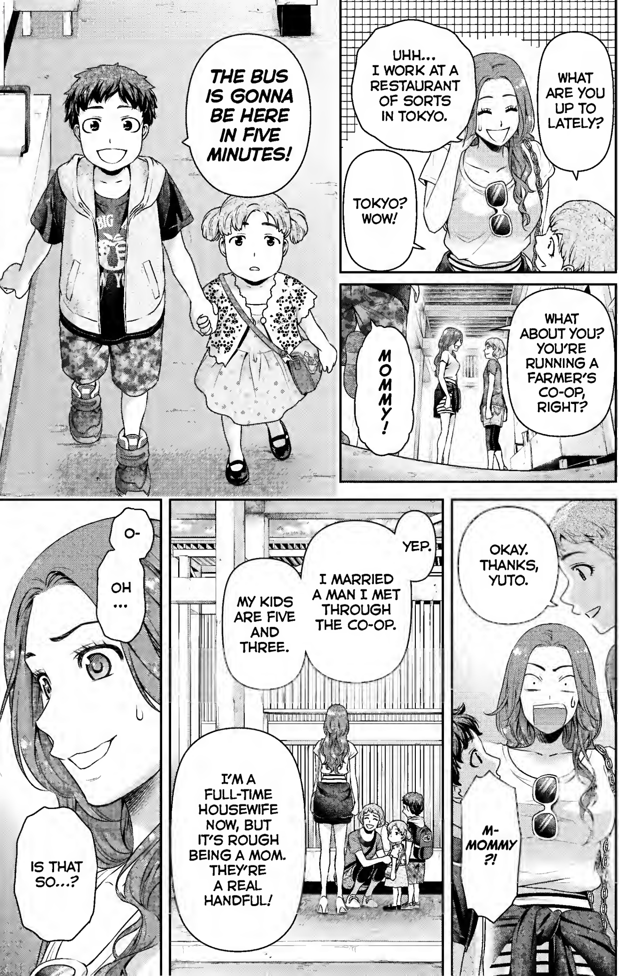

QUIT YOUR COMPLAINING AND GO!
HEY...! PUT ME DOWN, ERIKA! SERIOUSLY!
QUIET! YOU'LL JUST RUN AWAY IF I PUT YOU DOWN!
ALL RIGHT, I'LL GO! JUST STOP CARRYING ME LIKE THIS!
BOY, BUY THE TICKETS IN HER NAME, OKAY?
O-OKAY.
HE'S COMING, TOO?!

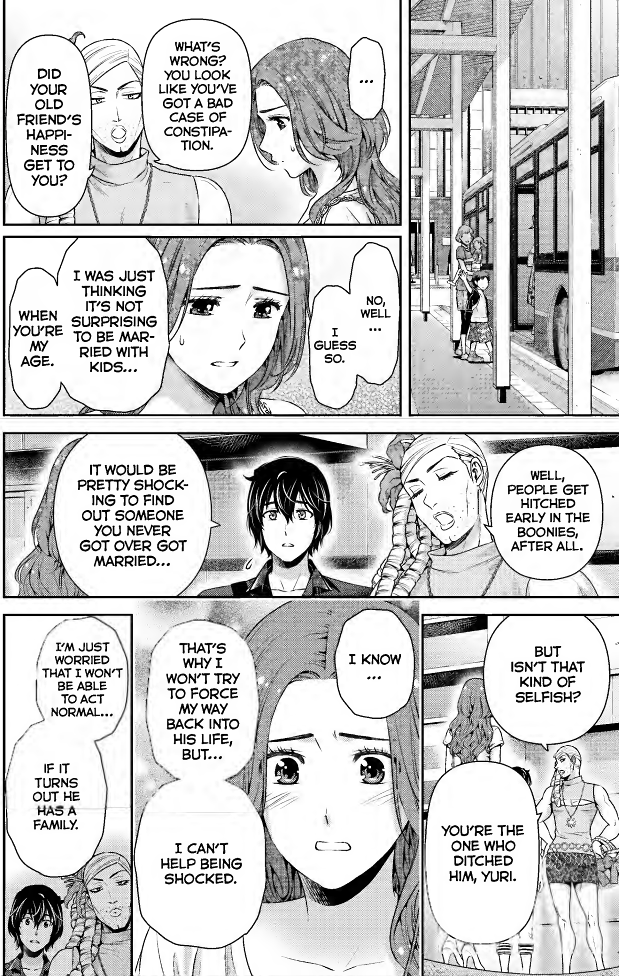
CHAPTER 103: ACTING

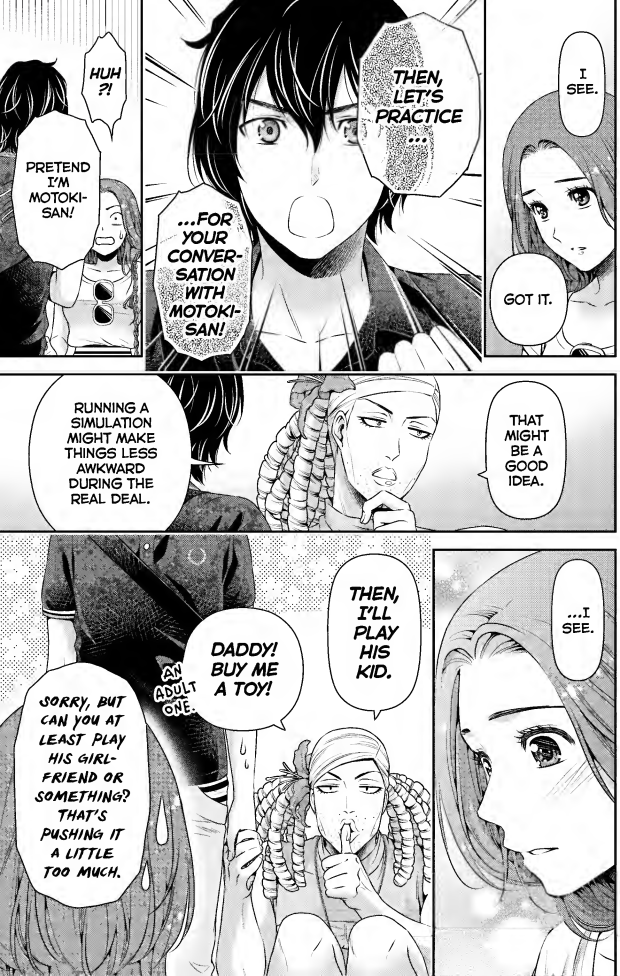

カ
秋田へようこそ
CLACK
HE-
HERE WE ARE ...
WHAAAT? HANG ON A SEC! HOW AM I EVEN SUPPOSED TO FACE HIM?!
バ
FWIP
DON'T CHICKEN OUT NOW! YOU'RE A GROWN WOMAN!

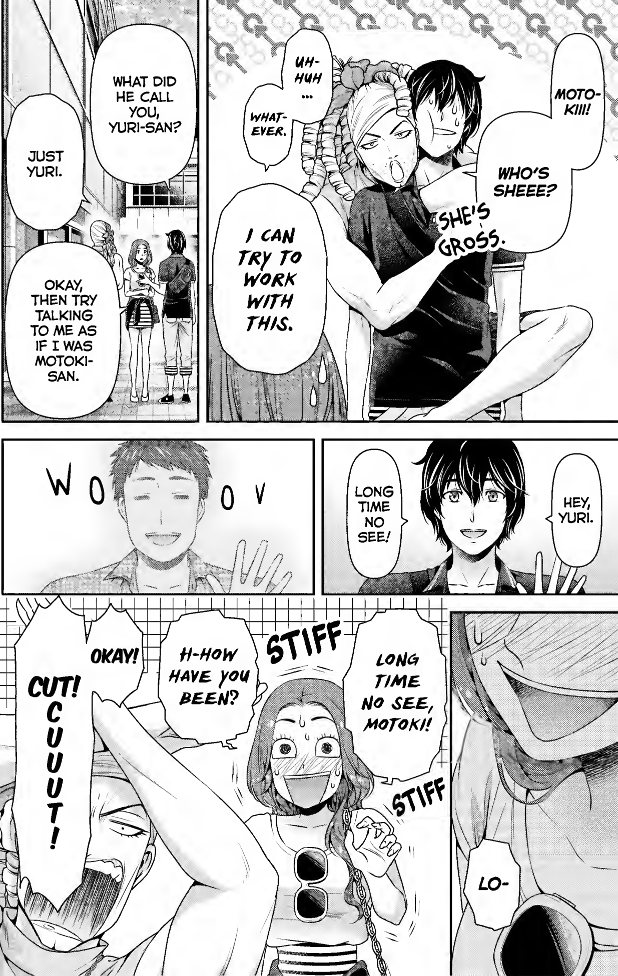

BUT I'M THE ONE WHO DUMPED HIM...
I DON'T KNOW WHAT I SHOULD SAY.
FOR STARTERS, HOW ABOUT, "LONG TIME NO SEE. HOW HAVE YOU BEEN?"
AND THEN?
...
"NICE BUTT YOU'VE GOT THERE."
"WANNA GET A ROOM?"
STROKE さわ
STROKE さわ
THAT KIND OF COMMUNICATION ONLY WORKS FOR YOU!
JEEZ. I'M BEING SERIOUS HERE...
I DON'T THINK YOU SHOULD LET THE FACT THAT YOU BROKE UP GET TO YOU THAT MUCH.
YOU COULD JUST START BY ASKING, "WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN UP TO?"
THEN EASE INTO IT AFTER CATCHING UP A BIT.
I SEE...
YOU'RE RIGHT.
I SHOULDN'T GET ALL SERIOUS RIGHT OFF THE BAT...
¥420

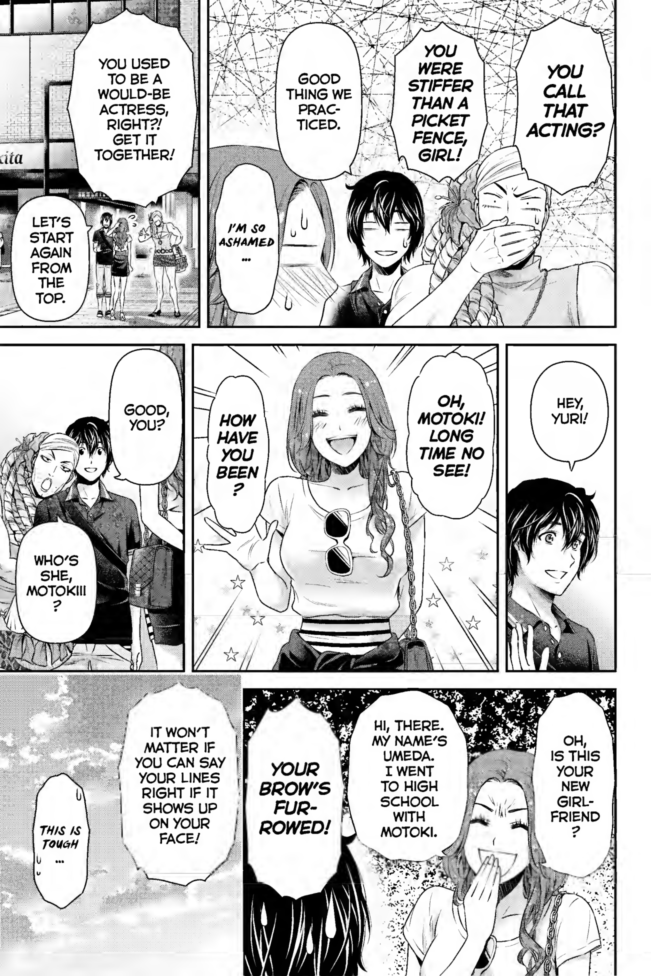

!
MIWAKO?!
WHO'S SHE?
A FRIEND FROM MIDDLE SCHOOL!
MIWAKO!
HM?
UMM...
IT'S ME!
YURI UMEDA, FROM MIDDLE SCHOOL!
YURI?!
OH, MY GOD! IT'S BEEN FOREVER!
I KNOW, RIGHT? HOW HAVE YOU BEEN?
GREAT! WOW, LOOK SO PRETTY, YURI!
OH, STOP. FLATTERY WON'T GET YOU ANYWHERE!
HUH...
HARD TO IMAGINE SHE'S A TOP-RANKING HOSTESS IN SHINJUKU.
SHE LOOKS LIKE A NORMAL GIRL RIGHT NOW.
IT'S OKAY. YOU CAN SAY SHE LOOKS LIKE A BORING OLD HOUSEWIFE, Y'KNOW.

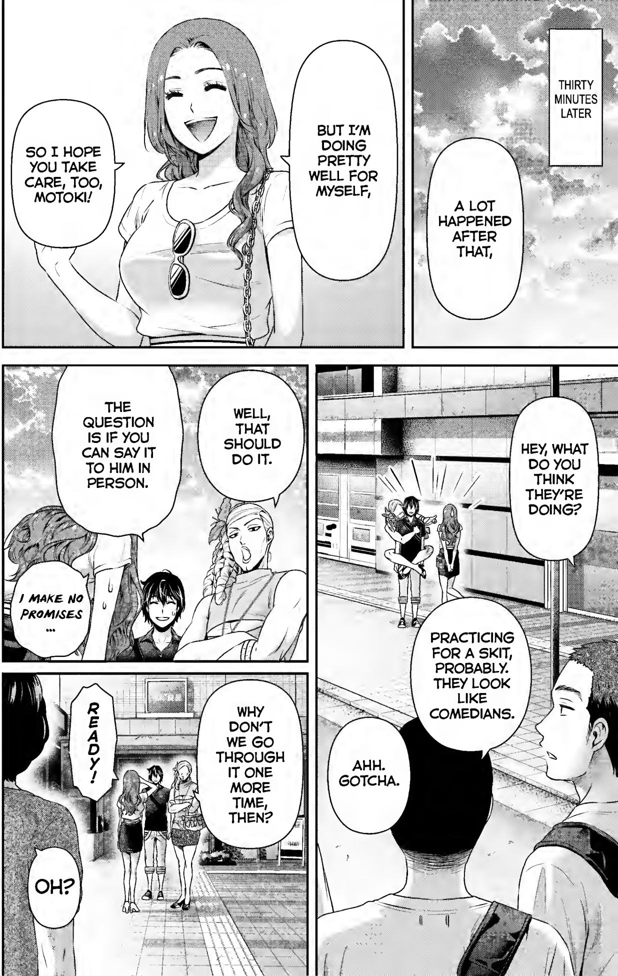

WHAT ARE YOU UP TO LATELY?
UHH... I WORK AT A RESTAURANT OF SORTS IN TOKYO.
TOKYO? WOW!
WHAT ABOUT YOU? YOU'RE RUNNING A FARMER'S CO-OP, RIGHT?
MOMMY!
THE BUS IS GONNA BE HERE IN FIVE MINUTES!
OKAY. THANKS, YUTO.
M-MOMMY?!
YEP.
I MARRIED A MAN I MET THROUGH THE CO-OP.
MY KIDS ARE FIVE AND THREE.
I'M A FULL-TIME HOUSEWIFE NOW, BUT IT'S ROUGH BEING A MOM. THEY'RE A REAL HANDFUL!
O-
OH ...
IS THAT SO...?

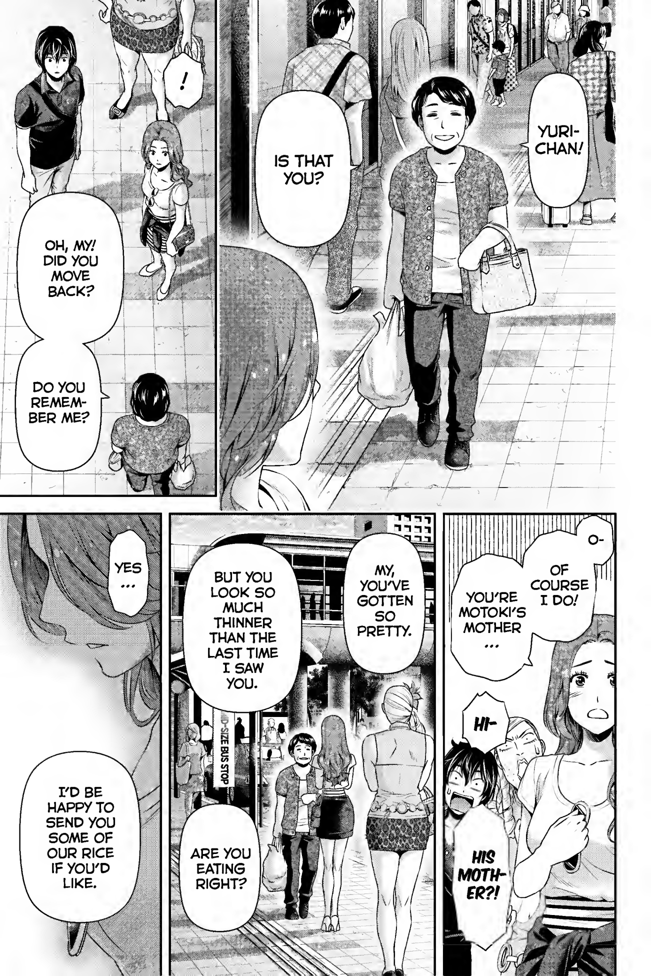

...
WHAT'S WRONG? YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'VE GOT A BAD CASE OF CONSTIPATION.
DID YOUR OLD FRIEND'S HAPPINESS GET TO YOU?
NO, WELL... I GUESS SO.
I WAS JUST THINKING IT'S NOT SURPRISING TO BE MARRIED WITH KIDS...
WHEN YOU'RE MY AGE.
WELL, PEOPLE GET HITCHED EARLY IN THE BOONIES, AFTER ALL.
IT WOULD BE PRETTY SHOCKING TO FIND OUT SOMEONE YOU NEVER GOT OVER GOT MARRIED...
BUT ISN'T THAT KIND OF SELFISH?
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO DITCHED HIM, YURI.
I KNOW...
THAT'S WHY I WON'T TRY TO FORCE MY WAY BACK INTO HIS LIFE, BUT...
I CAN'T HELP BEING SHOCKED.
I'M JUST WORRIED THAT I WON'T BE ABLE TO ACT NORMAL...
IF IT TURNS OUT HE HAS A FAMILY.

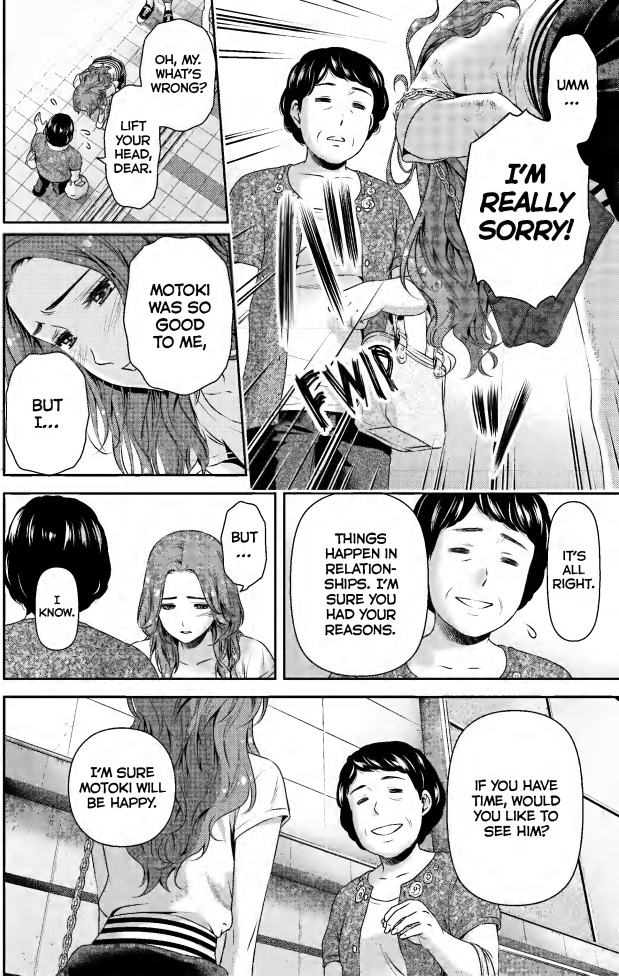

I SEE.
GOT IT.
THEN, LET'S PRACTICE...
...FOR YOUR CONVERSATION WITH MOTOKI-SAN!
HUH?!
PRETEND I'M MOTOKI-SAN!
THAT MIGHT BE A GOOD IDEA.
RUNNING A SIMULATION MIGHT MAKE THINGS LESS AWKWARD DURING THE REAL DEAL.
...I SEE.
THEN, I'LL PLAY HIS KID.
DADDY! BUY ME A TOY!
AN ADULT ONE.
SORRY, BUT CAN YOU AT LEAST PLAY HIS GIRLFRIEND OR SOMETHING? THAT'S PUSHING IT A LITTLE TOO MUCH.

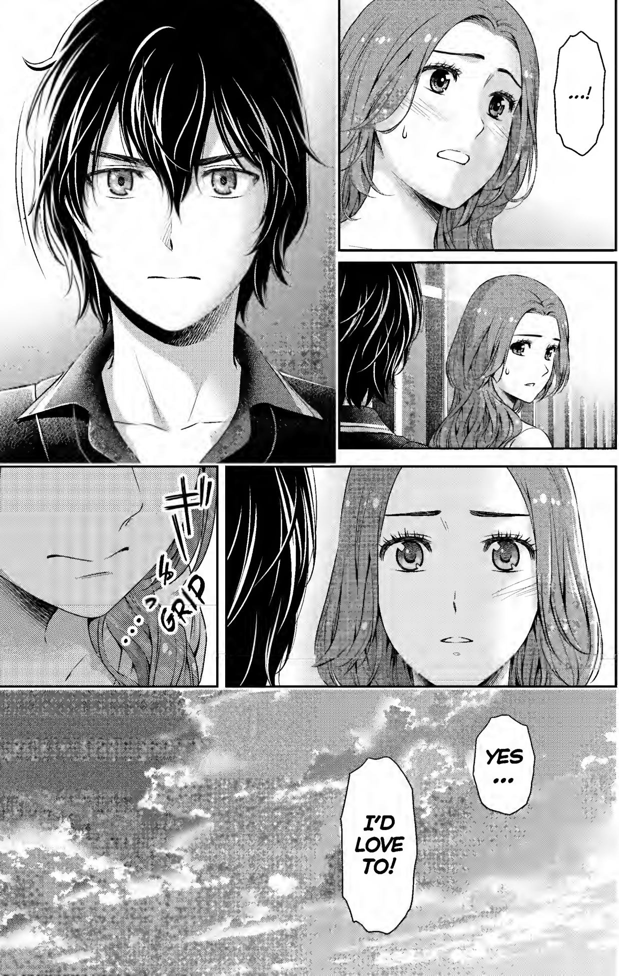

MOTO-KIII!
WHO'S SHEEE?
SHE'S GROSS.
UH-HUH ...
WHAT-EVER.
I CAN TRY TO WORK WITH THIS.
WHAT DID HE CALL YOU, YURI-SAN?
JUST YURI.
OKAY, THEN TRY TALKING TO ME AS IF I WAS MOTOKI-SAN.
HEY, YURI.
LONG TIME NO SEE!
W O O V
LO-
LONG TIME NO SEE, MOTOKI!
STIFF
H-HOW HAVE YOU BEEN?
STIFF
OKAY!
CUT! CUUUUT!

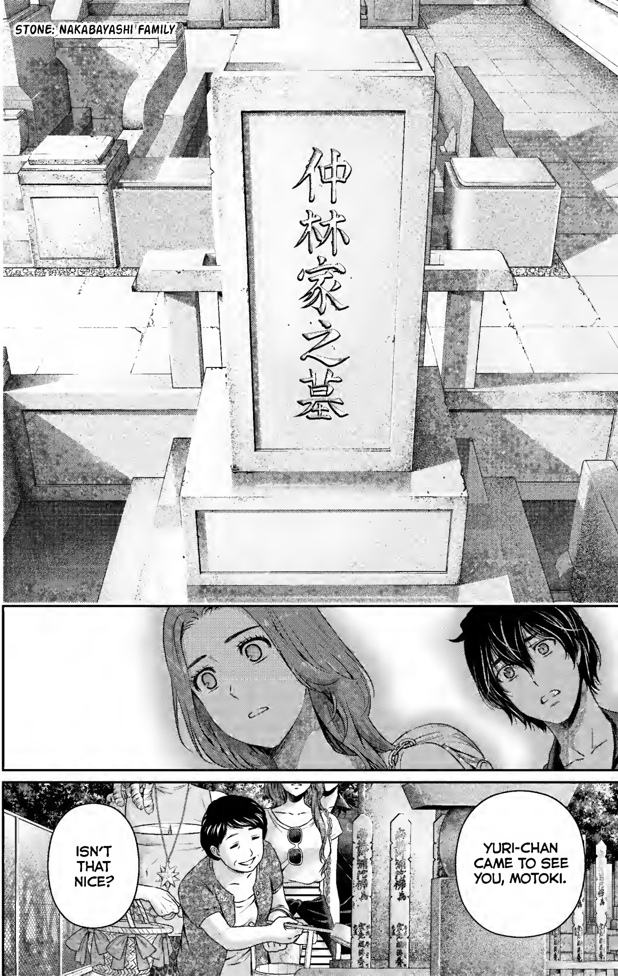

YOU CALL THAT ACTING?
YOU WERE STIFFER THAN A PICKET FENCE, GIRL!
GOOD THING WE PRACTICED.
I'M SO ASHAMED...
YOU USED TO BE A WOULD-BE ACTRESS, RIGHT?! GET IT TOGETHER!
LET'S START AGAIN FROM THE TOP.
HEY, YURI!
OH, MOTOKI! LONG TIME NO SEE!
HOW HAVE YOU BEEN?
GOOD, YOU?
WHO'S SHE, MOTOKIII?
OH, IS THIS YOUR NEW GIRLFRIEND?
HI, THERE. MY NAME'S UMEDA. I WENT TO HIGH SCHOOL WITH MOTOKI.
YOUR BROW'S FURROWED!
IT WON'T MATTER IF YOU CAN SAY YOUR LINES RIGHT IF IT SHOWS UP ON YOUR FACE!
THIS IS TOUGH...

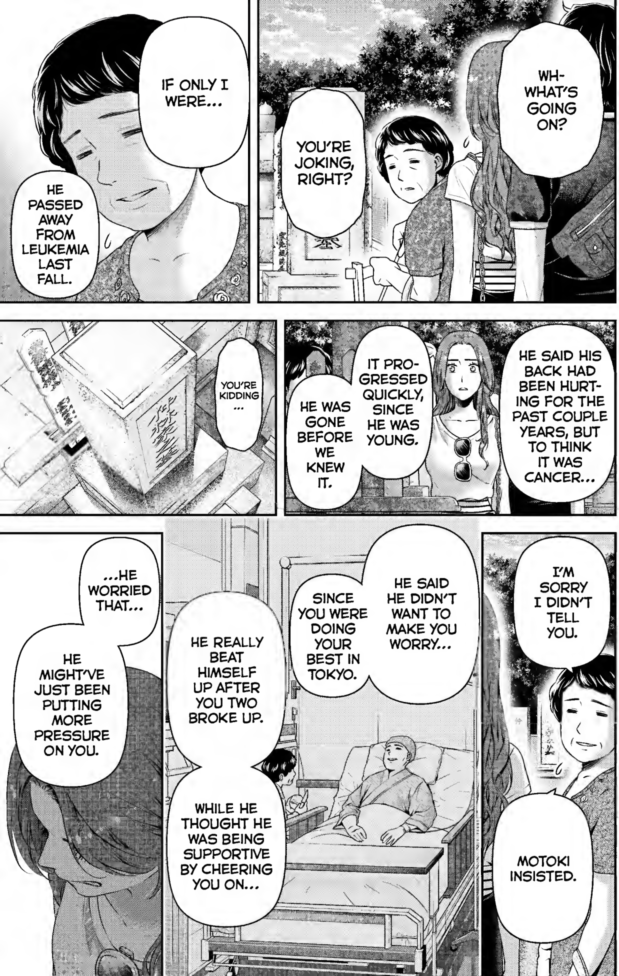

THIRTY MINUTES LATER
A LOT HAPPENED AFTER THAT,
BUT I'M DOING PRETTY WELL FOR MYSELF,
SO I HOPE YOU TAKE CARE, TOO, MOTOKI!
WELL, THAT SHOULD DO IT.
THE QUESTION IS IF YOU CAN SAY IT TO HIM IN PERSON.
I MAKE NO PROMISES...
WHY DON'T WE GO THROUGH IT ONE MORE TIME, THEN?
READY!
OH?
HEY, WHAT DO YOU THINK THEY'RE DOING?
PRACTICING FOR A SKIT, PROBABLY. THEY LOOK LIKE COMEDIANS.
AHH. GOTCHA.

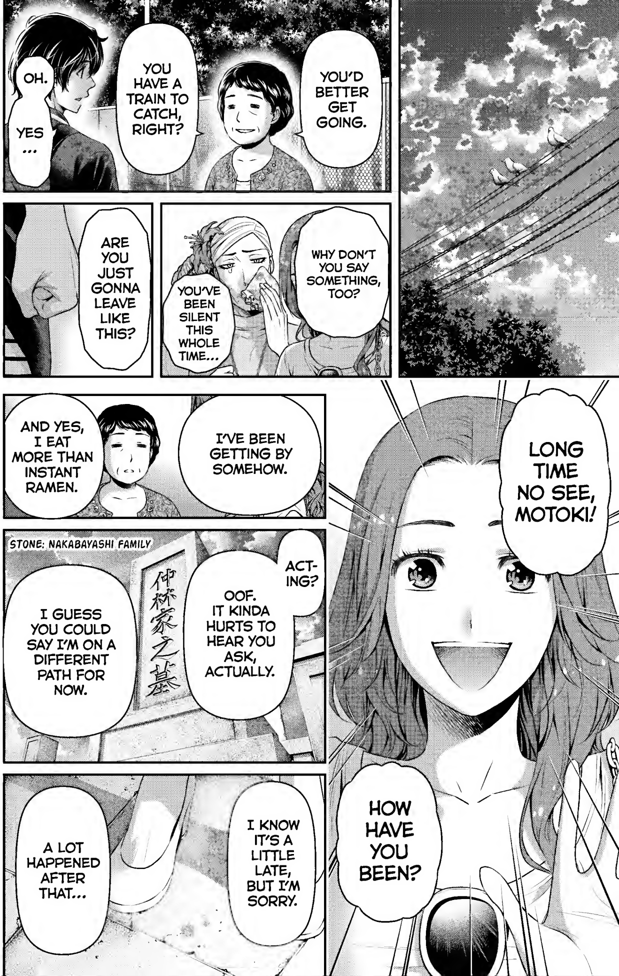

YURI-CHAN!
IS THAT YOU?
!
OH, MY! DID YOU MOVE BACK?
DO YOU REMEMBER ME?
O-
OF COURSE I DO!
YOU'RE MOTOKI'S MOTHER ...
HI-
HIS MOTHER?!
MY, YOU'VE GOTTEN SO PRETTY.
BUT YOU LOOK SO MUCH THINNER THAN THE LAST TIME I SAW YOU.
ID-SIZE BUS STOP
ARE YOU EATING RIGHT?
YES ...
I'D BE HAPPY TO SEND YOU SOME OF OUR RICE IF YOU'D LIKE.

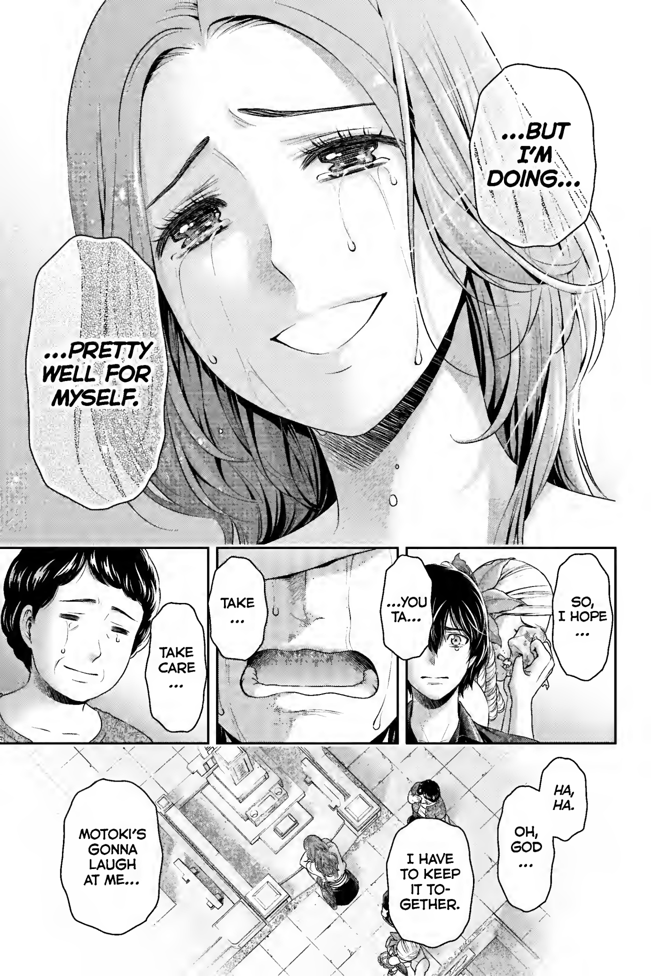

UMM ...
I'M REALLY SORRY!
FWIP
OH, MY. WHAT'S WRONG?
LIFT YOUR HEAD, DEAR.
MOTOKI WAS SO GOOD TO ME,
BUT I...
IT'S ALL RIGHT.
THINGS HAPPEN IN RELATIONSHIPS. I'M SURE YOU HAD YOUR REASONS.
BUT ...
I KNOW.
IF YOU HAVE TIME, WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE HIM?
I'M SURE MOTOKI WILL BE HAPPY.

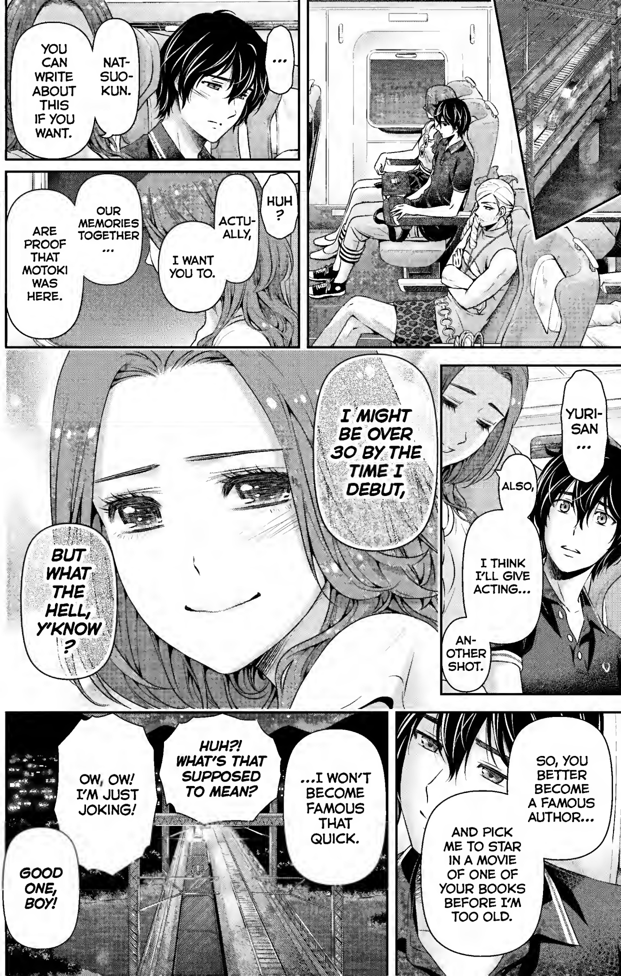

...!
GRIP
...
YES...
I'D LOVE TO!


STONE: NAKABAYASHI FAMILY
仲林家之墓
YURI-CHAN CAME TO SEE YOU, MOTOKI.
ISN'T THAT NICE?


WH- WHAT'S GOING ON?
YOU'RE JOKING, RIGHT?
IF ONLY I WERE...
HE PASSED AWAY FROM LEUKEMIA LAST FALL.
HE SAID HIS BACK HAD BEEN HURTING FOR THE PAST COUPLE YEARS, BUT TO THINK IT WAS CANCER...
IT PROGRESSED QUICKLY, SINCE HE WAS YOUNG.
HE WAS GONE BEFORE WE KNEW IT.
YOU'RE KIDDING...
I'M SORRY I DIDN'T TELL YOU.
MOTOKI INSISTED.
HE SAID HE DIDN'T WANT TO MAKE YOU WORRY...
SINCE YOU WERE DOING YOUR BEST IN TOKYO.
HE REALLY BEAT HIMSELF UP AFTER YOU TWO BROKE UP.
WHILE HE THOUGHT HE WAS BEING SUPPORTIVE BY CHEERING YOU ON...
...HE WORRIED THAT...
HE MIGHT'VE JUST BEEN PUTTING MORE PRESSURE ON YOU.


YOU'D BETTER GET GOING.
YOU HAVE A TRAIN TO CATCH, RIGHT?
OH.
YES...
WHY DON'T YOU SAY SOMETHING, TOO?
YOU'VE BEEN SILENT THIS WHOLE TIME...
ARE YOU JUST GONNA LEAVE LIKE THIS?
LONG TIME NO SEE, MOTOKI!
HOW HAVE YOU BEEN?
I'VE BEEN GETTING BY SOMEHOW.
AND YES, I EAT MORE THAN INSTANT RAMEN.
STONE: NAKABAYASHI FAMILY
仲林家之墓
ACT-ING?
OOF. IT KINDA HURTS TO HEAR YOU ASK, ACTUALLY.
I GUESS YOU COULD SAY I'M ON A DIFFERENT PATH FOR NOW.
I KNOW IT'S A LITTLE LATE, BUT I'M SORRY.
A LOT HAPPENED AFTER THAT...


...BUT I'M DOING...
...PRETTY WELL FOR MYSELF.
SO, I HOPE ...
...YOU TA...
TAKE ...
TAKE CARE ...
HA, HA.
OH, GOD ...
I HAVE TO KEEP IT TOGETHER.
MOTOKI'S GONNA LAUGH AT ME...

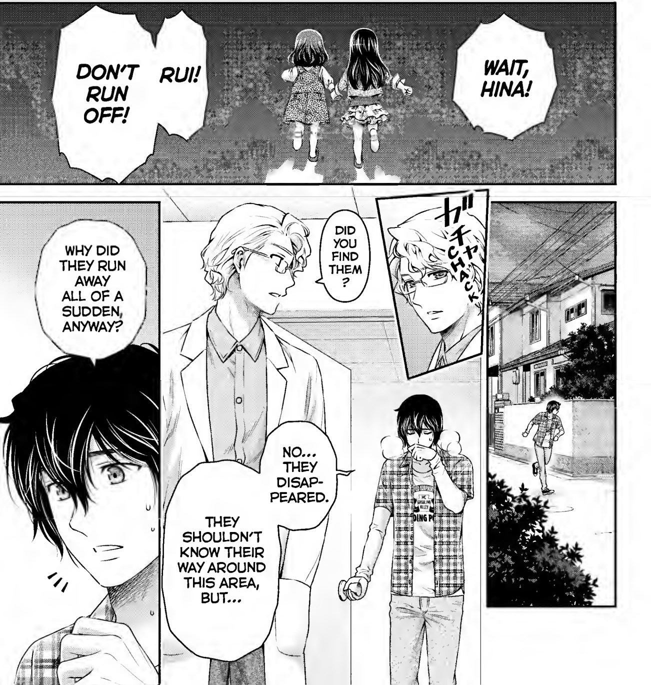

...
NATSUO-KUN.
YOU CAN WRITE ABOUT THIS IF YOU WANT.
HUH?
ACTUALLY,
I WANT YOU TO.
OUR MEMORIES TOGETHER...
ARE PROOF THAT MOTOKI WAS HERE.
YURI-SAN...
ALSO,
I THINK I'LL GIVE ACTING...
ANOTHER SHOT.
I MIGHT BE OVER 30 BY THE TIME I DEBUT,
BUT WHAT THE HELL, Y'KNOW?
SO, YOU BETTER BECOME A FAMOUS AUTHOR...
AND PICK ME TO STAR IN A MOVIE OF ONE OF YOUR BOOKS BEFORE I'M TOO OLD.
...I WON'T BECOME FAMOUS THAT QUICK.
HUH?! WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?
OW, OW! I'M JUST JOKING!
GOOD ONE, BOY!

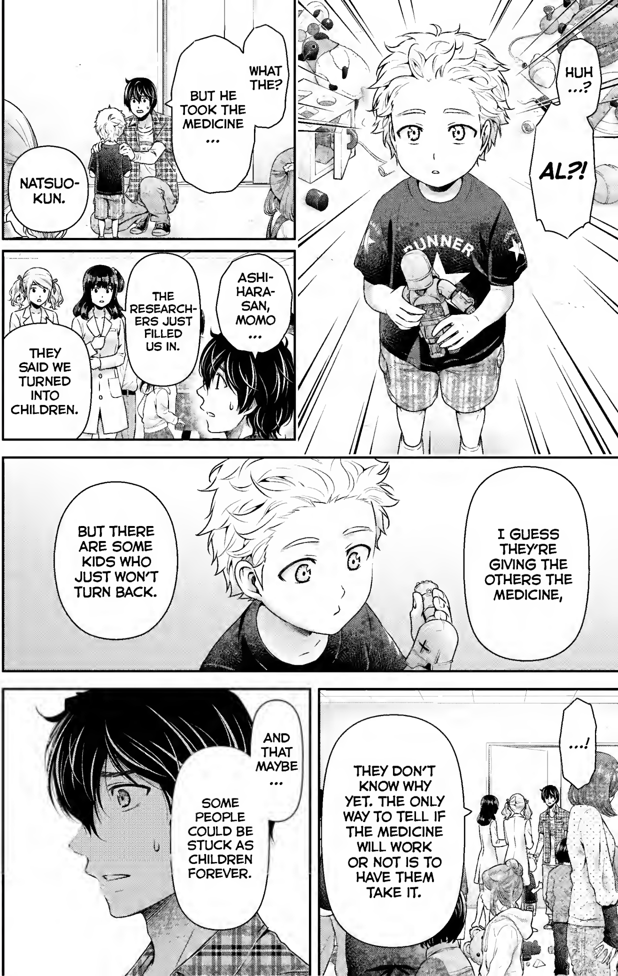
EXTRA MANGA

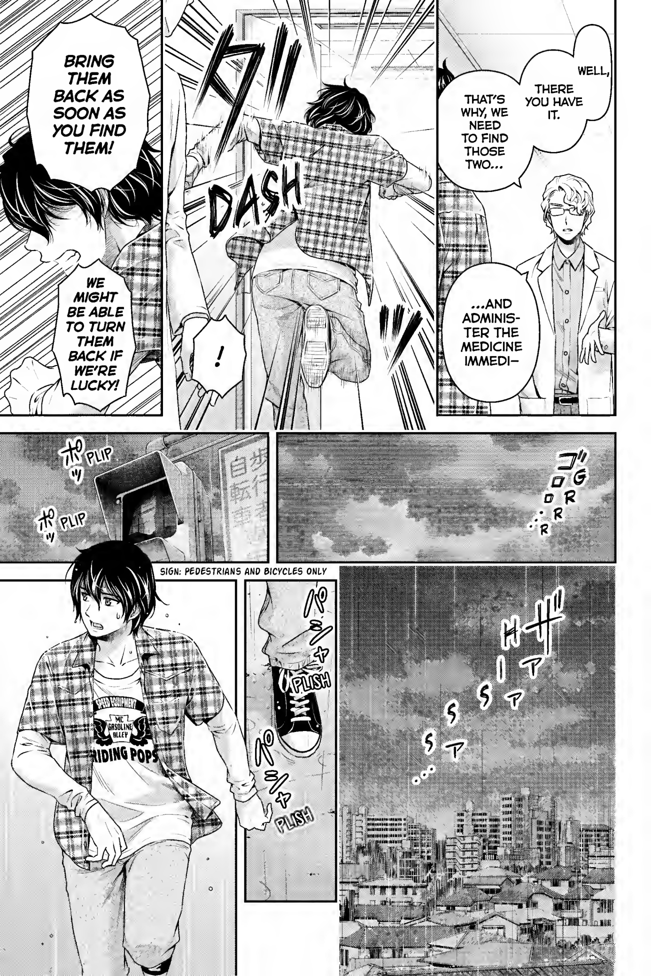
SWEET HOME MAGIC

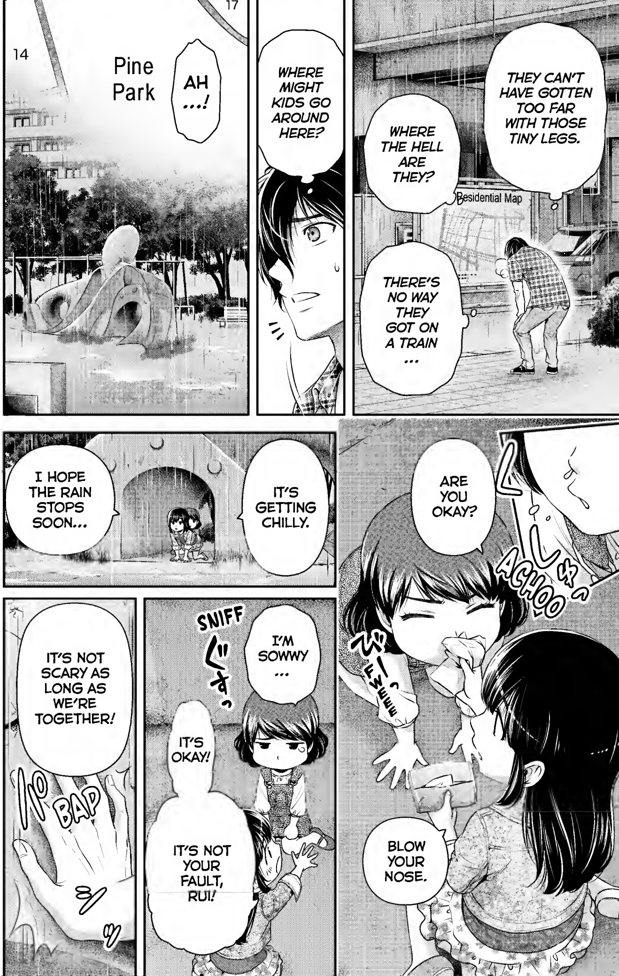
☆ THE STORY SO FAR ☆

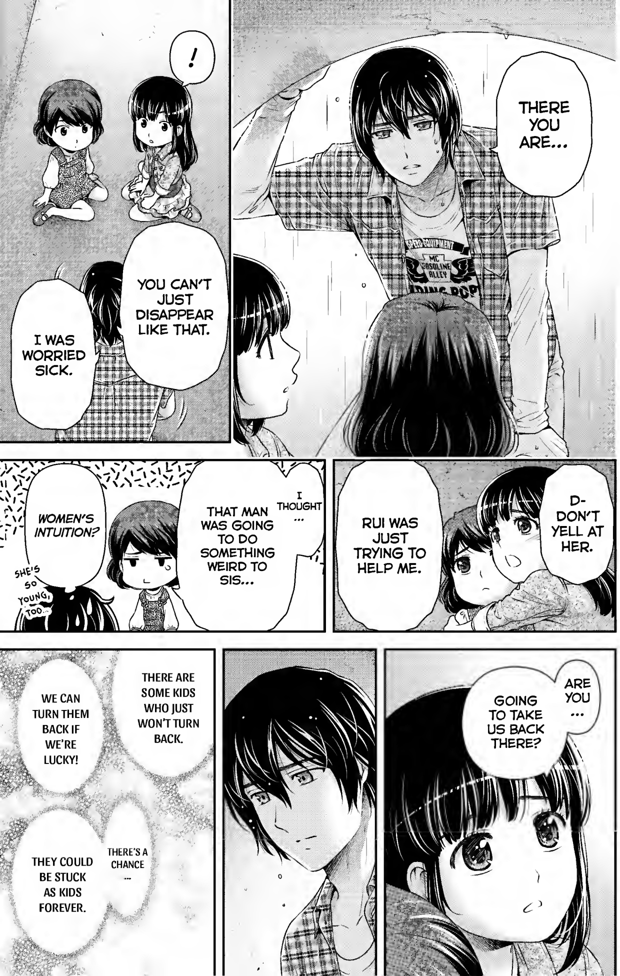
AFTER A MYSTERIOUS DRUG TURNS HINA AND RUI INTO CHILDREN, NATSUO DESPERATELY SEARCHES FOR A WAY TO TURN THEM BACK, BUT JUST WHEN HE'S ABOUT TO MAKE THEM TAKE AN ANTIDOTE...

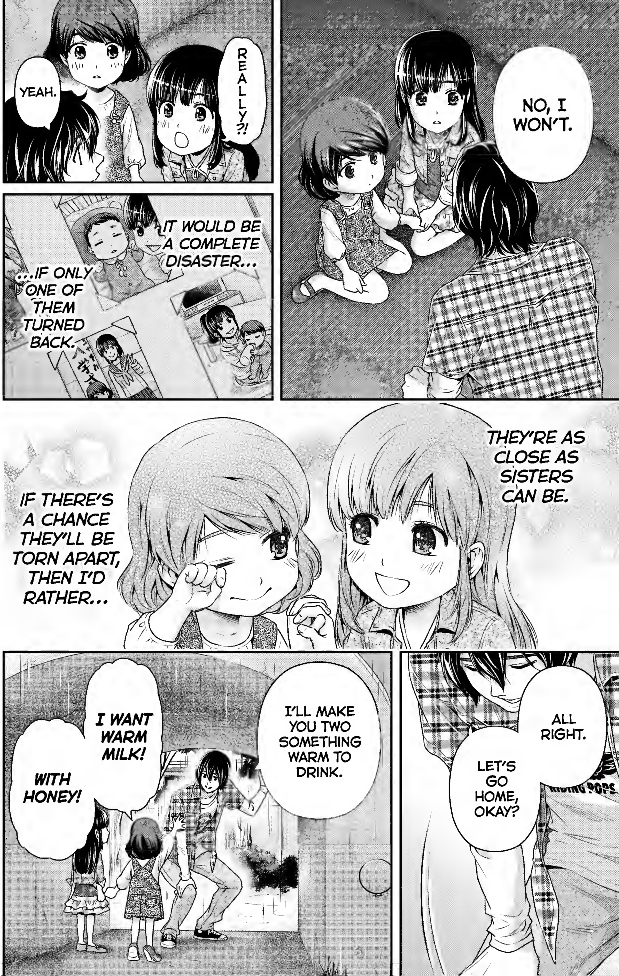

WAIT, HINA!
RUI!
DON'T RUN OFF!
ガチャ CHACK
DID YOU FIND THEM?
NO... THEY DISAPPEARED.
THEY SHOULDN'T KNOW THEIR WAY AROUND THIS AREA, BUT...
WHY DID THEY RUN AWAY ALL OF A SUDDEN, ANYWAY?

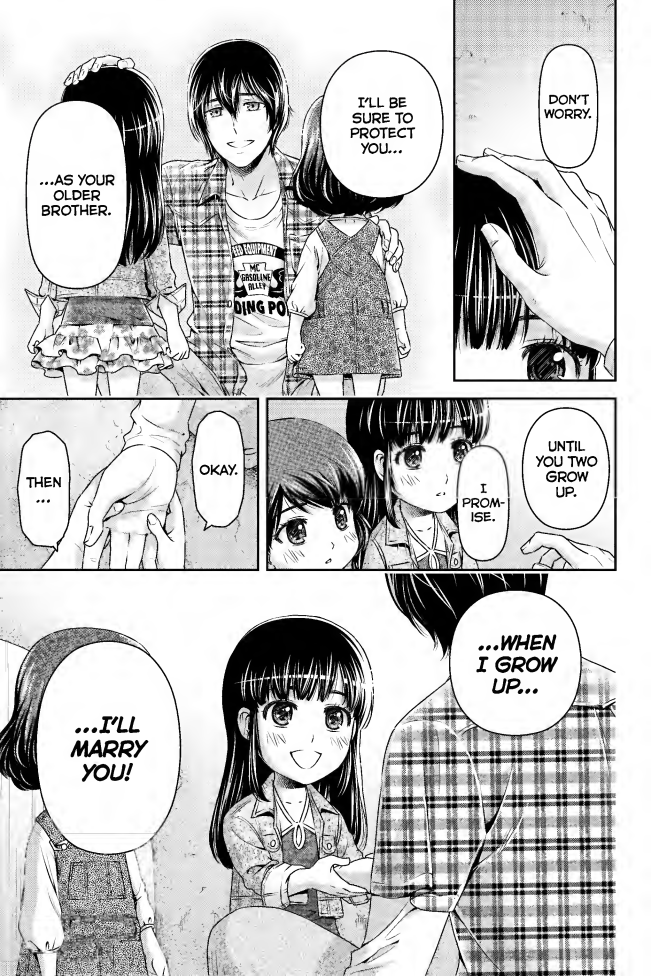

HUH ...?
AL?!
WHAT THE?
BUT HE TOOK THE MEDICINE ...
NATSUO-KUN.
ASHIHARA-SAN, MOMO ...
THE RESEARCHERS JUST FILLED US IN.
THEY SAID WE TURNED INTO CHILDREN.
RUNNER
I GUESS THEY'RE GIVING THE OTHERS THE MEDICINE,
BUT THERE ARE SOME KIDS WHO JUST WON'T TURN BACK.
...!
THEY DON'T KNOW WHY YET. THE ONLY WAY TO TELL IF THE MEDICINE WILL WORK OR NOT IS TO HAVE THEM TAKE IT.
AND THAT MAYBE ...
SOME PEOPLE COULD BE STUCK AS CHILDREN FOREVER.

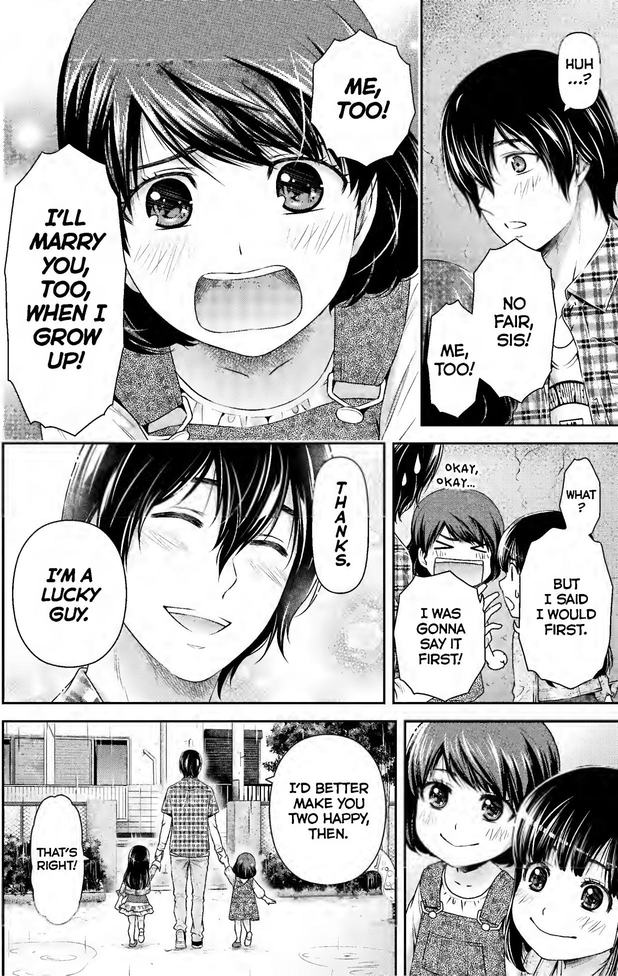

WELL,
THERE YOU HAVE IT.
THAT'S WHY, WE NEED TO FIND THOSE TWO...
...AND ADMINISTER THE MEDICINE IMMEDI-
ダッ
DASH
!
BRING THEM BACK AS SOON AS YOU FIND THEM!
WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO TURN THEM BACK IF WE'RE LUCKY!
ゴロロ GRRR...
ポツ PLIP
ポツ PLIP
SIGN: PEDESTRIANS AND BICYCLES ONLY
ザァァァ HISSS...
パシャ PLISH
パシャ PLISH
SPEED EQUIPMENT
MC GASOLINE ALLEY
RIDING POPS

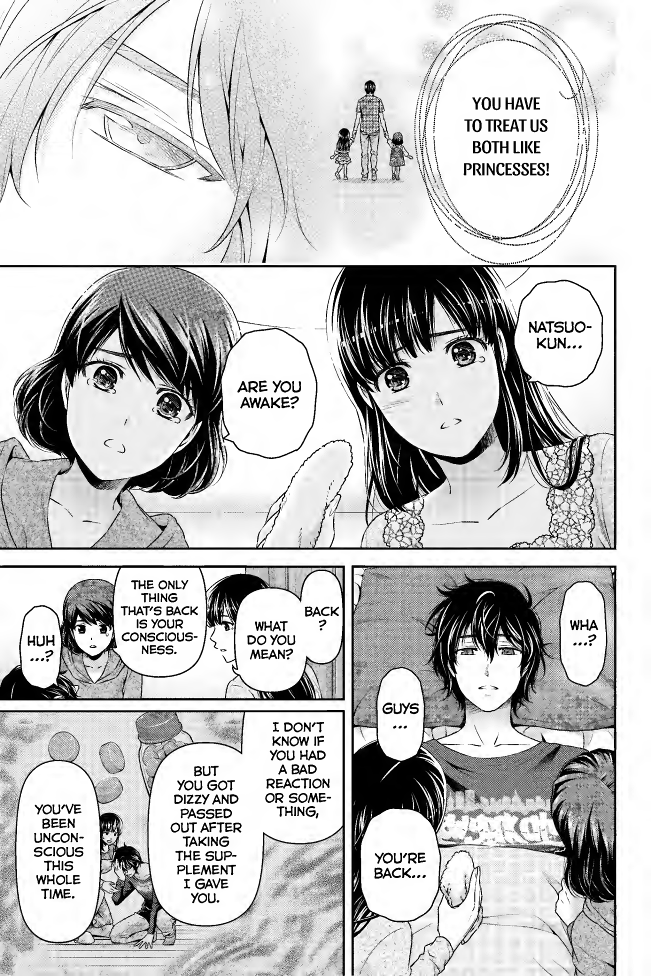

THEY CAN'T HAVE GOTTEN TOO FAR WITH THOSE TINY LEGS.
WHERE THE HELL ARE THEY?
Residential Map
THERE'S NO WAY THEY GOT ON A TRAIN ...
WHERE MIGHT KIDS GO AROUND HERE?
17
AH ...!
Pine Park
14
ARE YOU OKAY?
ACHOO
FWEEE
BLOW YOUR NOSE.
IT'S GETTING CHILLY.
I HOPE THE RAIN STOPS SOON...
SNIFF
I'M SOWWY ...
IT'S OKAY!
IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT, RUI!
IT'S NOT SCARY AS LONG AS WE'RE TOGETHER!
BAP

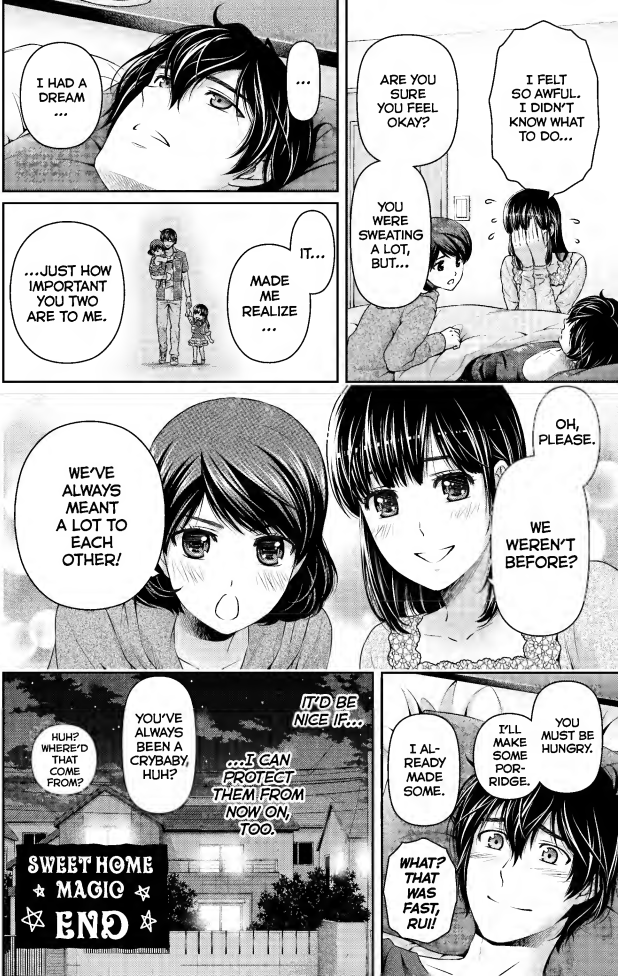

THERE YOU ARE...
!
YOU CAN'T JUST DISAPPEAR LIKE THAT.
I WAS WORRIED SICK.
D-DON'T YELL AT HER.
RUI WAS JUST TRYING TO HELP ME.
I THOUGHT...
THAT MAN WAS GOING TO DO SOMETHING WEIRD TO SIS...
WOMEN'S INTUITION?
SHE'S SO YOUNG, TOO...
ARE YOU...
GOING TO TAKE US BACK THERE?
THERE ARE SOME KIDS WHO JUST WON'T TURN BACK.
WE CAN TURN THEM BACK IF WE'RE LUCKY!
THERE'S A CHANCE...
THEY COULD BE STUCK AS KIDS FOREVER.


NO, I WON'T.
REALLY?!
YEAH.
IT WOULD BE A COMPLETE DISASTER...
...IF ONLY ONE OF THEM TURNED BACK.
THEY'RE AS CLOSE AS SISTERS CAN BE.
IF THERE'S A CHANCE THEY'LL BE TORN APART, THEN I'D RATHER...
ALL RIGHT.
LET'S GO HOME, OKAY?
RIDING POPS
I'LL MAKE YOU TWO SOMETHING WARM TO DRINK.
I WANT WARM MILK!
WITH HONEY!


DON'T WORRY.
I'LL BE SURE TO PROTECT YOU...
...AS YOUR OLDER BROTHER.
EED EQUIPMENT MC GASOLINE ALLEY DING PO
UNTIL YOU TWO GROW UP.
I PROMISE.
OKAY.
THEN ...
...WHEN I GROW UP...
...I'LL MARRY YOU!

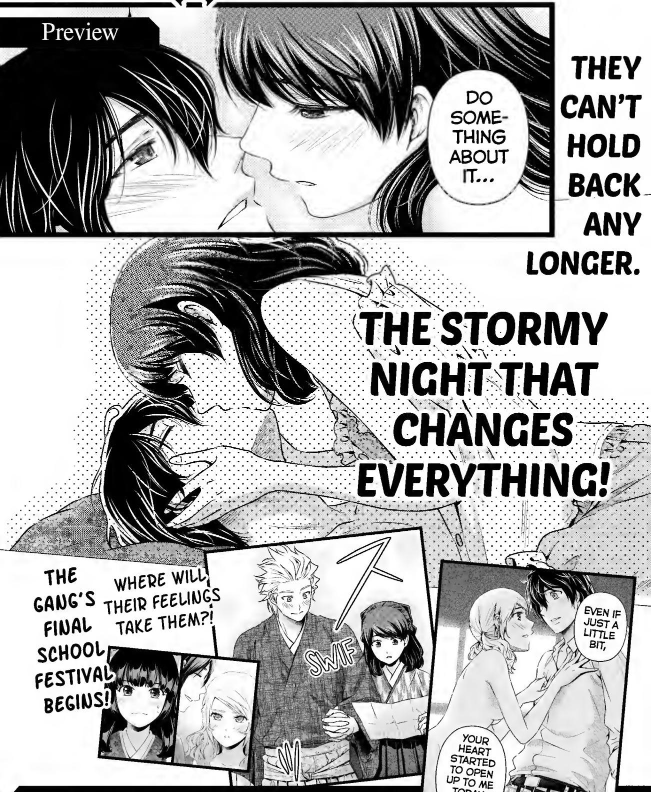

HUH ...?
NO FAIR, SIS!
ME, TOO!
ME, TOO!
I'LL MARRY YOU, TOO, WHEN I GROW UP!
WHAT?
BUT I SAID I WOULD FIRST.
OKAY, OKAY...
I WAS GONNA SAY IT FIRST!
THANKS.
I'M A LUCKY GUY.
I'D BETTER MAKE YOU TWO HAPPY, THEN.
THAT'S RIGHT!


YOU HAVE TO TREAT US BOTH LIKE PRINCESSES!
NATSUO-KUN...
ARE YOU AWAKE?
WHA...?
GUYS...
YOU'RE BACK...
BACK?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
THE ONLY THING THAT'S BACK IS YOUR CONSCIOUSNESS.
HUH...?
I DON'T KNOW IF YOU HAD A BAD REACTION OR SOMETHING,
BUT YOU GOT DIZZY AND PASSED OUT AFTER TAKING THE SUPPLEMENT I GAVE YOU.
YOU'VE BEEN UNCONSCIOUS THIS WHOLE TIME.


I FELT SO AWFUL. I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO...
ARE YOU SURE YOU FEEL OKAY?
YOU WERE SWEATING A LOT, BUT...
...
I HAD A DREAM...
IT...
MADE ME REALIZE...
...JUST HOW IMPORTANT YOU TWO ARE TO ME.
OH, PLEASE.
WE WEREN'T BEFORE?
WE'VE ALWAYS MEANT A LOT TO EACH OTHER!
YOU MUST BE HUNGRY.
I'LL MAKE SOME PORRIDGE.
I ALREADY MADE SOME.
WHAT? THAT WAS FAST, RUI!
IT'D BE NICE IF...
...I CAN PROTECT THEM FROM NOW ON, TOO.
YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN A CRYBABY, HUH?
HUH? WHERE'D THAT COME FROM?
SWEET HOME MAGIC END

DOME X GIRL

Preview


DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT...
EVEN IF JUST A LITTLE BIT,
YOUR HEART STARTED TO OPEN UP TO ME TODAY, RIGHT?
SWIF

THEY CAN'T HOLD BACK ANY LONGER.

THE STORMY NIGHT THAT CHANGES EVERYTHING!

THE GANG'S FINAL SCHOOL FESTIVAL BEGINS!

WHERE WILL THEIR FEELINGS TAKE THEM?!

What will happen to Natsuo and Rui?!

VOLUME 12

Domestic Girlfriend 11

KODANSHA COMICS Digital Edition

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First published in Japan in 2016 by Kodansha Ltd., Tokyo.
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English digital edition published by Kodansha Advanced Media, LLC, San Francisco.

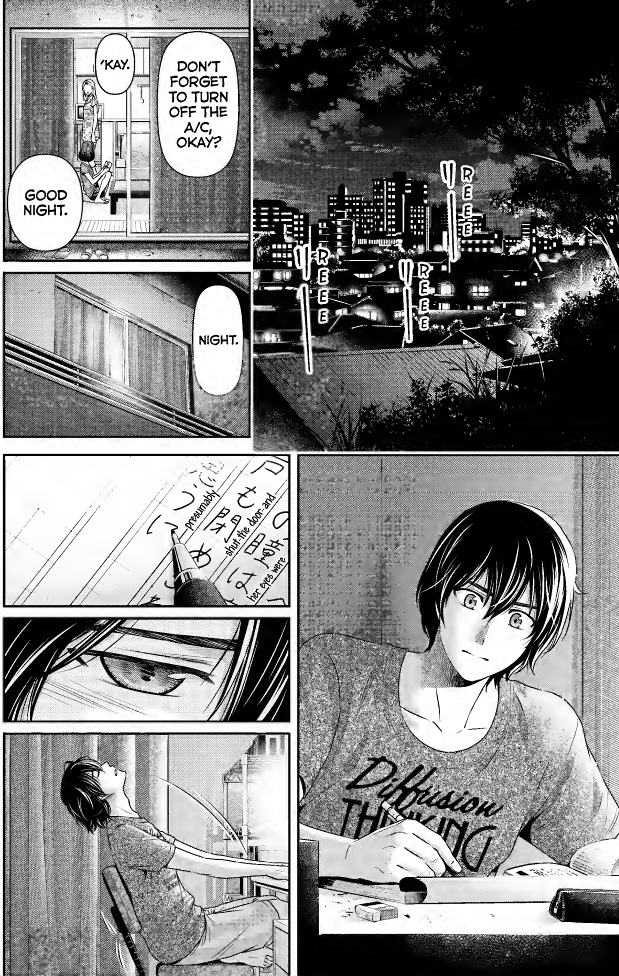
www.kodanshacomics.com

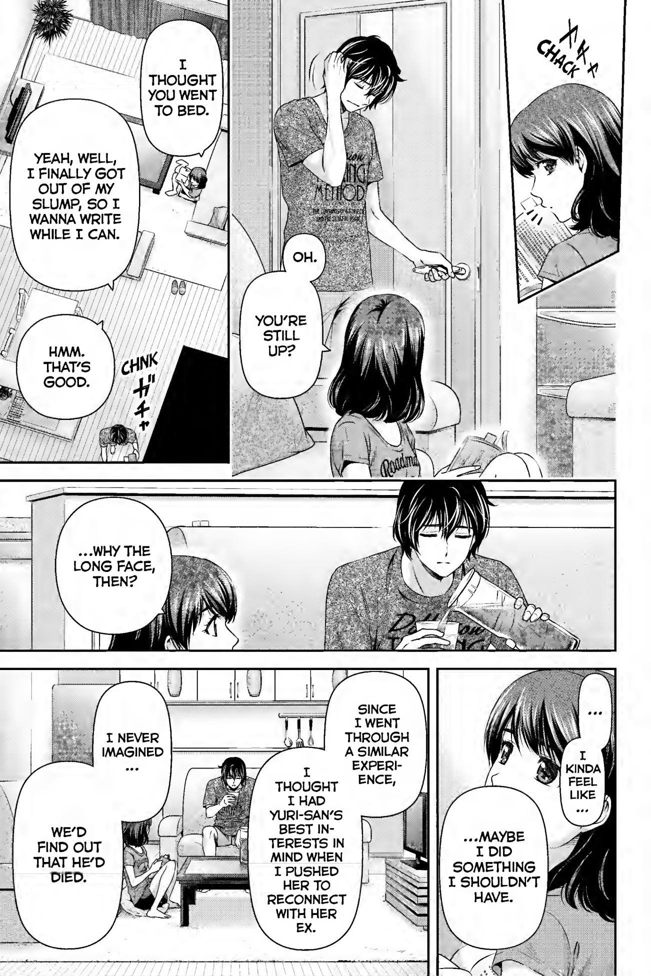
ISBN: 9781642120288

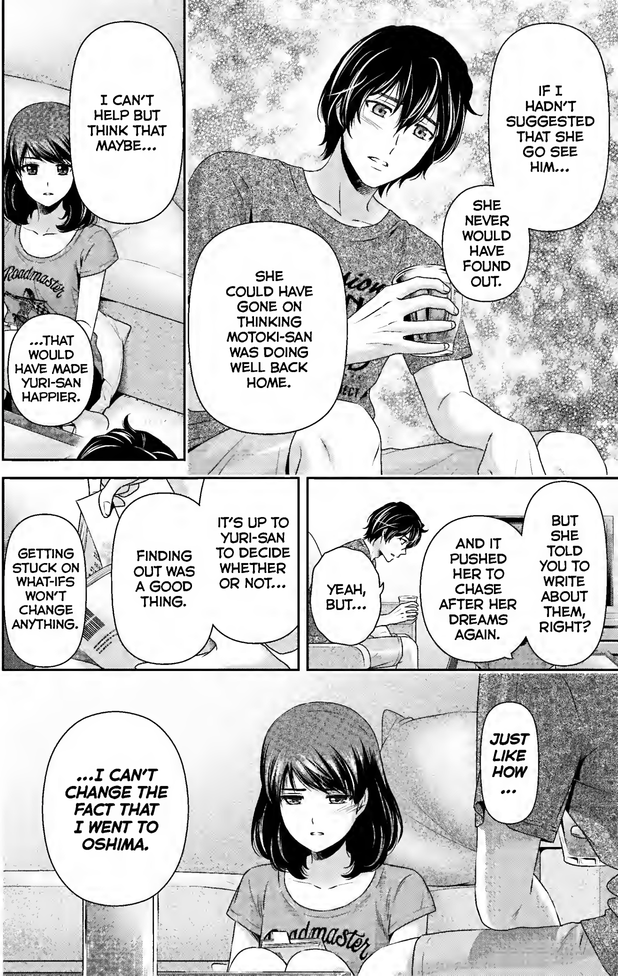
Digital Edition: 1.0.0

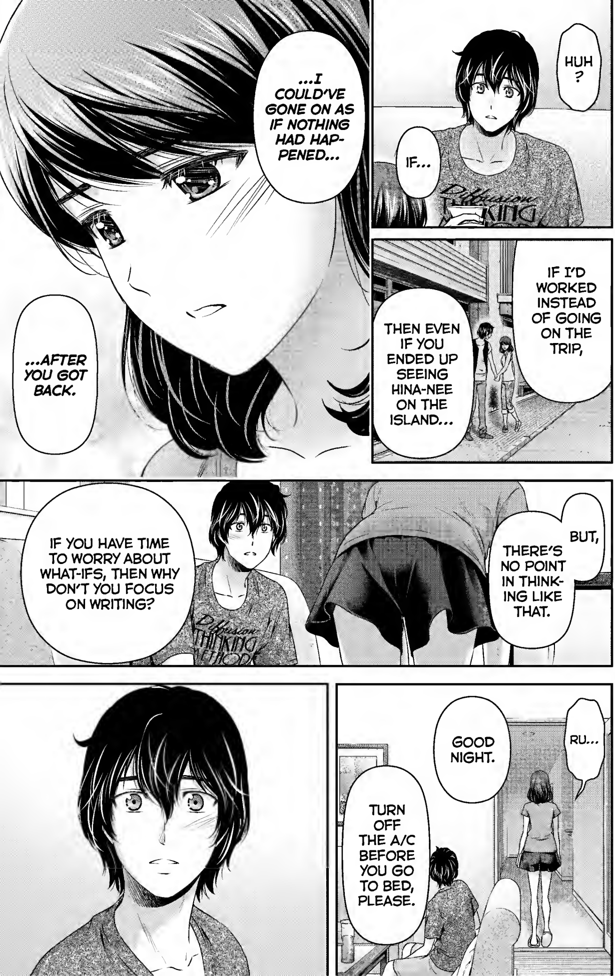
Translation by Adam Hirsch
Lettering by Daniel Park
Editing by Sarah Tilson
YKS Services LLC/SKY Japan, INC.

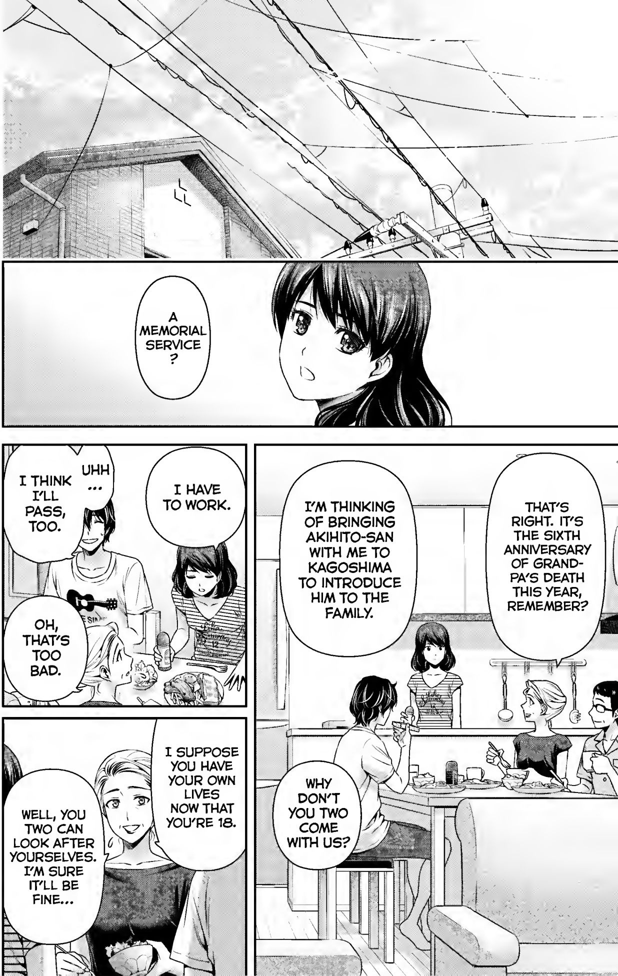
CHAPTER 104: NIGHT OF THE STORM

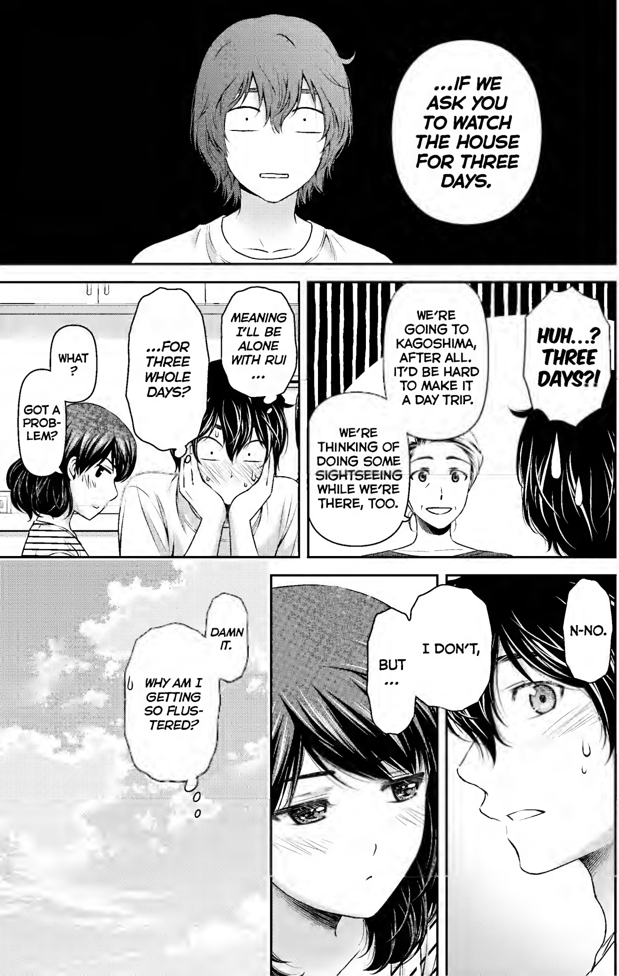

DON'T FORGET TO TURN OFF THE A/C, OKAY?
'KAY.
GOOD NIGHT.
NIGHT.
REEE
REEE
REEE
her eyes were
shut the door and
presumably
Diffusion THINKING

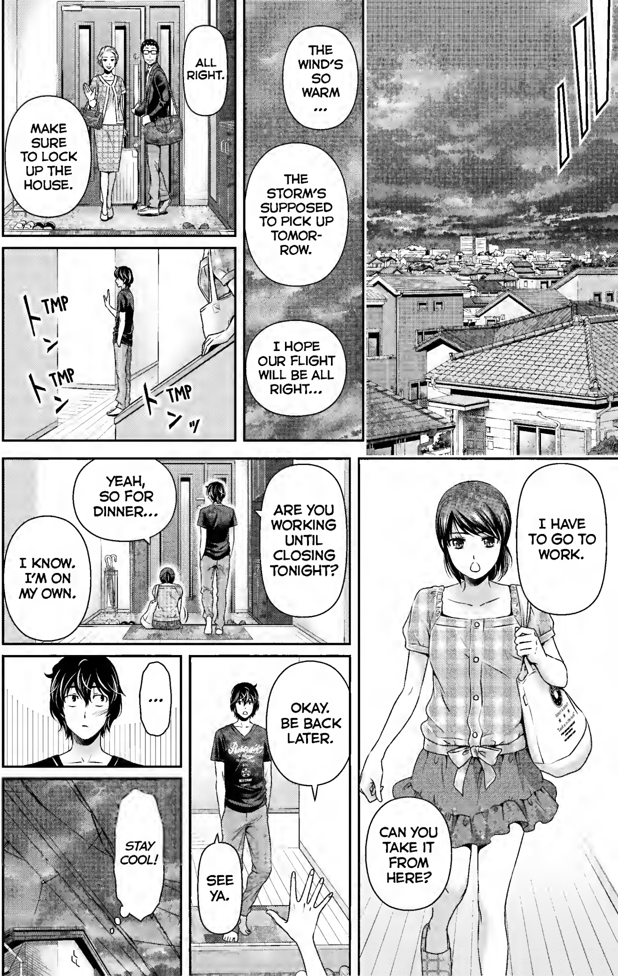

CHACK
カチャ
OH.
YOU'RE STILL UP?
I THOUGHT YOU WENT TO BED.
YEAH, WELL, I FINALLY GOT OUT OF MY SLUMP, SO I WANNA WRITE WHILE I CAN.
HMM. THAT'S GOOD.
CHNK
ガチャ
...WHY THE LONG FACE, THEN?
...
I KINDA FEEL LIKE ...
...MAYBE I DID SOMETHING I SHOULDN'T HAVE.
SINCE I WENT THROUGH A SIMILAR EXPERIENCE,
I THOUGHT I HAD YURI-SAN'S BEST INTERESTS IN MIND WHEN I PUSHED HER TO RECONNECT WITH HER EX.
I NEVER IMAGINED ...
WE'D FIND OUT THAT HE'D DIED.

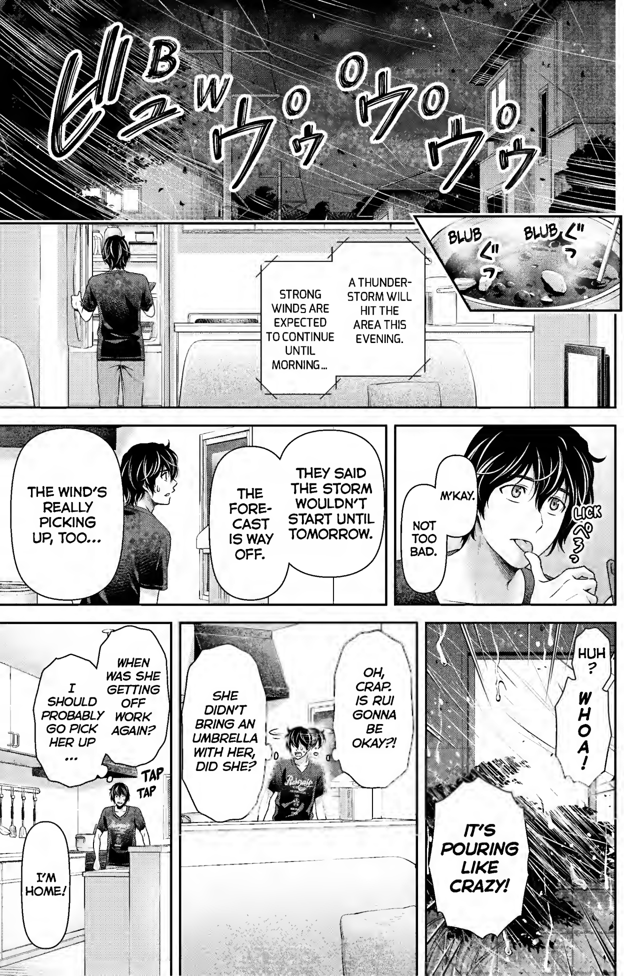

IF I HADN'T SUGGESTED THAT SHE GO SEE HIM...
SHE NEVER WOULD HAVE FOUND OUT.
SHE COULD HAVE GONE ON THINKING MOTOKI-SAN WAS DOING WELL BACK HOME.
I CAN'T HELP BUT THINK THAT MAYBE...
...THAT WOULD HAVE MADE YURI-SAN HAPPIER.
Roadmaster
BUT SHE TOLD YOU TO WRITE ABOUT THEM, RIGHT?
AND IT PUSHED HER TO CHASE AFTER HER DREAMS AGAIN.
YEAH, BUT...
IT'S UP TO YURI-SAN TO DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT...
FINDING OUT WAS A GOOD THING.
GETTING STUCK ON WHAT-IFS WON'T CHANGE ANYTHING.
JUST LIKE HOW...
...I CAN'T CHANGE THE FACT THAT I WENT TO OSHIMA.
Roadmaster

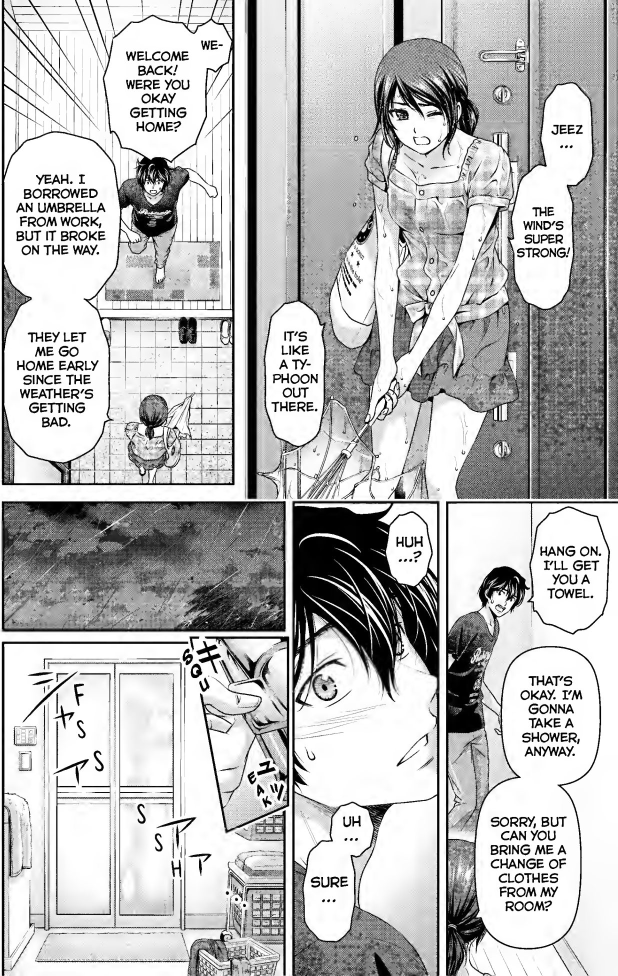

HUH?
IF...
IF I'D WORKED INSTEAD OF GOING ON THE TRIP,
THEN EVEN IF YOU ENDED UP SEEING HINA-NEE ON THE ISLAND...
...I COULD'VE GONE ON AS IF NOTHING HAD HAPPENED...
...AFTER YOU GOT BACK.
BUT,
THERE'S NO POINT IN THINKING LIKE THAT.
IF YOU HAVE TIME TO WORRY ABOUT WHAT-IFS, THEN WHY DON'T YOU FOCUS ON WRITING?
RU...
GOOD NIGHT.
TURN OFF THE A/C BEFORE YOU GO TO BED, PLEASE.

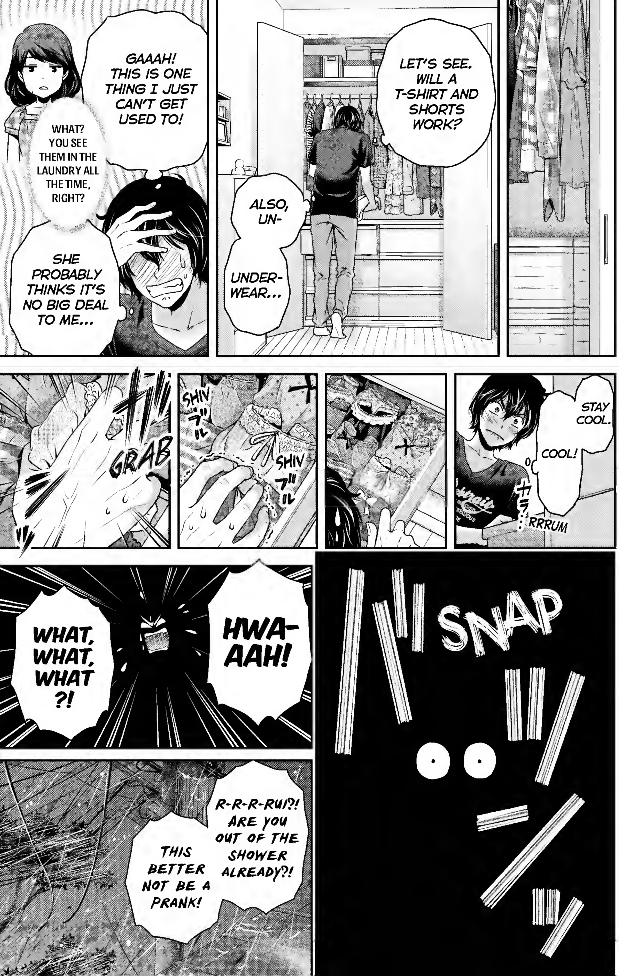

A MEMORIAL SERVICE?
THAT'S RIGHT. IT'S THE SIXTH ANNIVERSARY OF GRAND-PA'S DEATH THIS YEAR, REMEMBER?
I'M THINKING OF BRINGING AKIHITO-SAN WITH ME TO KAGOSHIMA TO INTRODUCE HIM TO THE FAMILY.
WHY DON'T YOU TWO COME WITH US?
I HAVE TO WORK.
UHH...
I THINK I'LL PASS, TOO.
OH, THAT'S TOO BAD.
I SUPPOSE YOU HAVE YOUR OWN LIVES NOW THAT YOU'RE 18.
WELL, YOU TWO CAN LOOK AFTER YOURSELVES. I'M SURE IT'LL BE FINE...

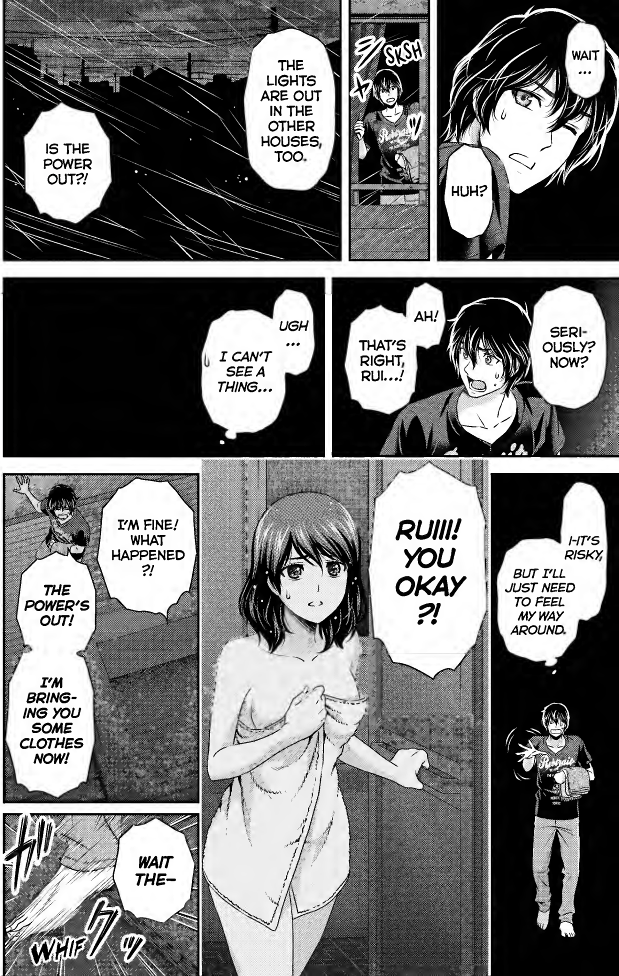

...IF WE ASK YOU TO WATCH THE HOUSE FOR THREE DAYS.
HUH...? THREE DAYS?!
WE'RE GOING TO KAGOSHIMA, AFTER ALL. IT'D BE HARD TO MAKE IT A DAY TRIP.
WE'RE THINKING OF DOING SOME SIGHTSEEING WHILE WE'RE THERE, TOO.
MEANING I'LL BE ALONE WITH RUI...
...FOR THREE WHOLE DAYS?
WHAT?
GOT A PROBLEM?
N-NO.
I DON'T,
BUT...
DAMN IT.
WHY AM I GETTING SO FLUSTERED?

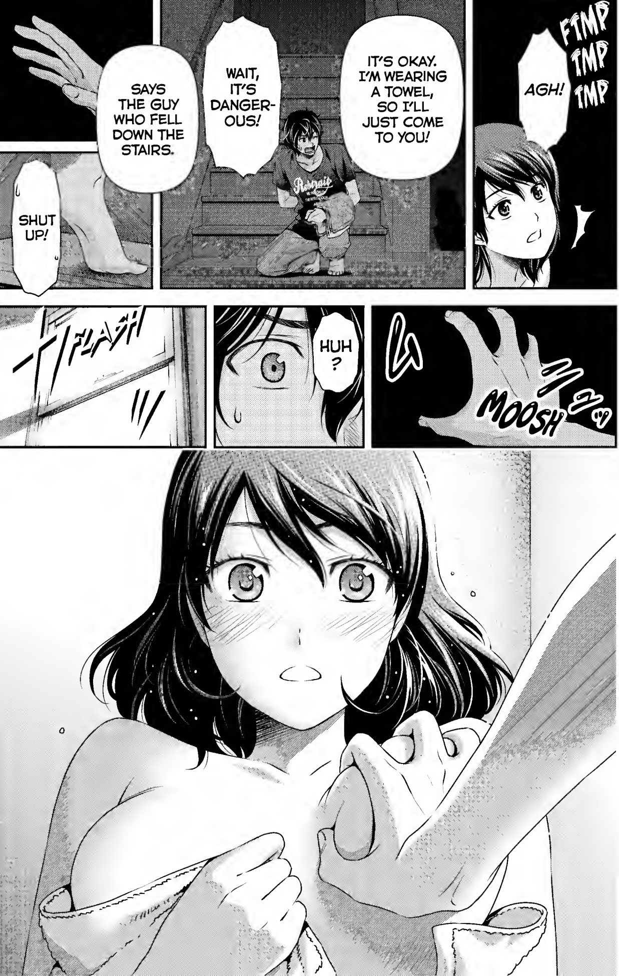

THE WIND'S SO WARM...
THE STORM'S SUPPOSED TO PICK UP TOMORROW.
I HOPE OUR FLIGHT WILL BE ALL RIGHT...
MAKE SURE TO LOCK UP THE HOUSE.
ALL RIGHT.
トン TMP
トン TMP
トンッ TMP
I HAVE TO GO TO WORK.
CAN YOU TAKE IT FROM HERE?
ARE YOU WORKING UNTIL CLOSING TONIGHT?
YEAH, SO FOR DINNER...
I KNOW. I'M ON MY OWN.
OKAY. BE BACK LATER.
SEE YA.
...
STAY COOL!

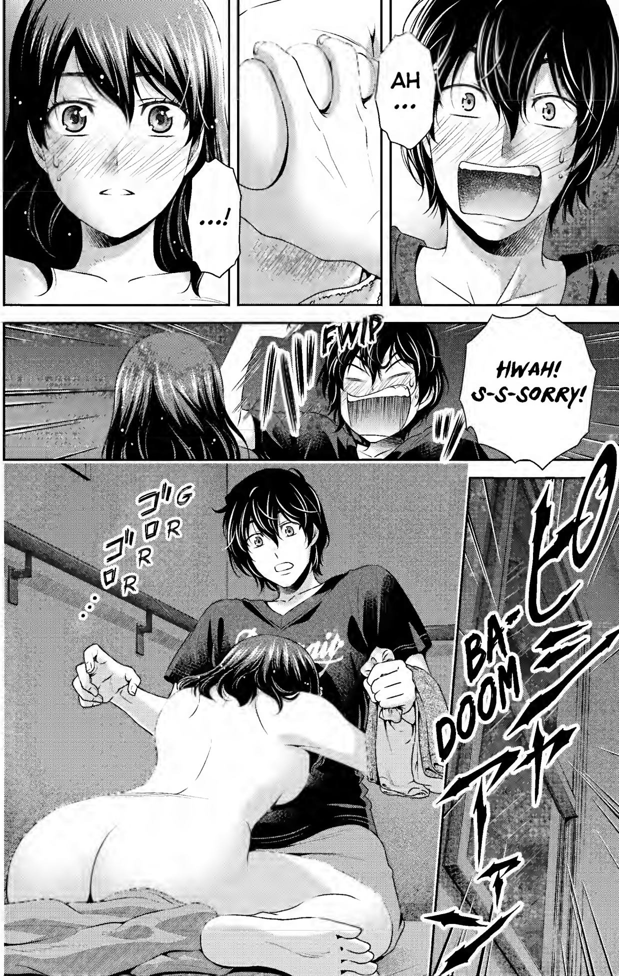

ビュウウウウ
BWOOOO
ぐつぐつ
BLUB BLUB
A THUNDERSTORM WILL HIT THE AREA THIS EVENING.
STRONG WINDS ARE EXPECTED TO CONTINUE UNTIL MORNING...
M'KAY.
NOT TOO BAD.
ぺろっ
LICK
THEY SAID THE STORM WOULDN'T START UNTIL TOMORROW.
THE FORECAST IS WAY OFF.
THE WIND'S REALLY PICKING UP, TOO...
HUH? WHOA!
IT'S POURING LIKE CRAZY!
OH, CRAP. IS RUI GONNA BE OKAY?!
SHE DIDN'T BRING AN UMBRELLA WITH HER, DID SHE?
WHEN WAS SHE GETTING OFF WORK AGAIN?
I SHOULD PROBABLY GO PICK HER UP...
TAP TAP
I'M HOME!

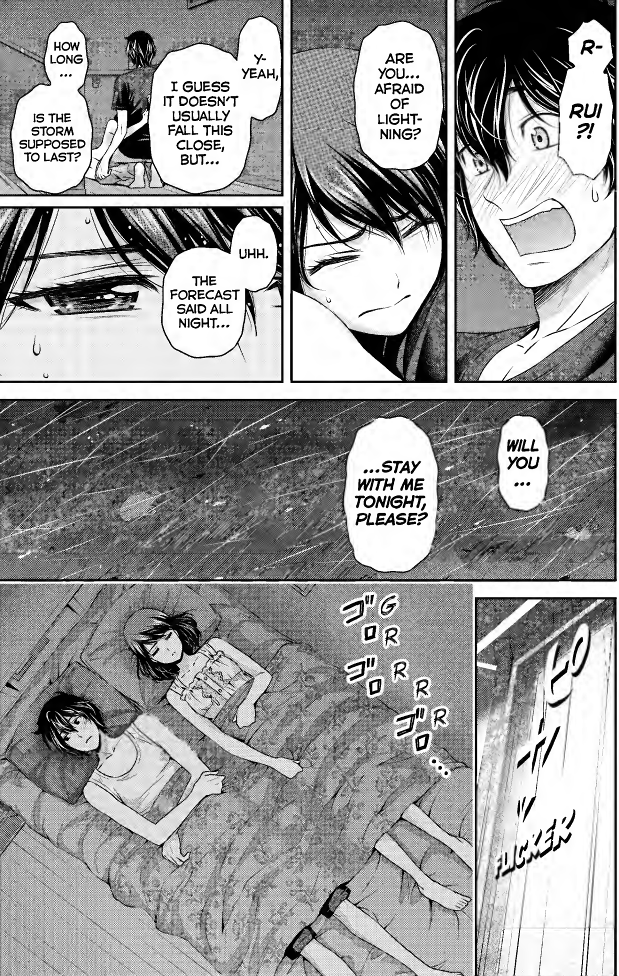

JEEZ ...
THE WIND'S SUPER STRONG!
IT'S LIKE A TYPHOON OUT THERE.
WE-
WELCOME BACK! WERE YOU OKAY GETTING HOME?
YEAH. I BORROWED AN UMBRELLA FROM WORK, BUT IT BROKE ON THE WAY.
THEY LET ME GO HOME EARLY SINCE THE WEATHER'S GETTING BAD.
HANG ON. I'LL GET YOU A TOWEL.
THAT'S OKAY. I'M GONNA TAKE A SHOWER, ANYWAY.
SORRY, BUT CAN YOU BRING ME A CHANGE OF CLOTHES FROM MY ROOM?
HUH ...?
UH ...
SURE ...
SQU
EAK
FSS
SSHH

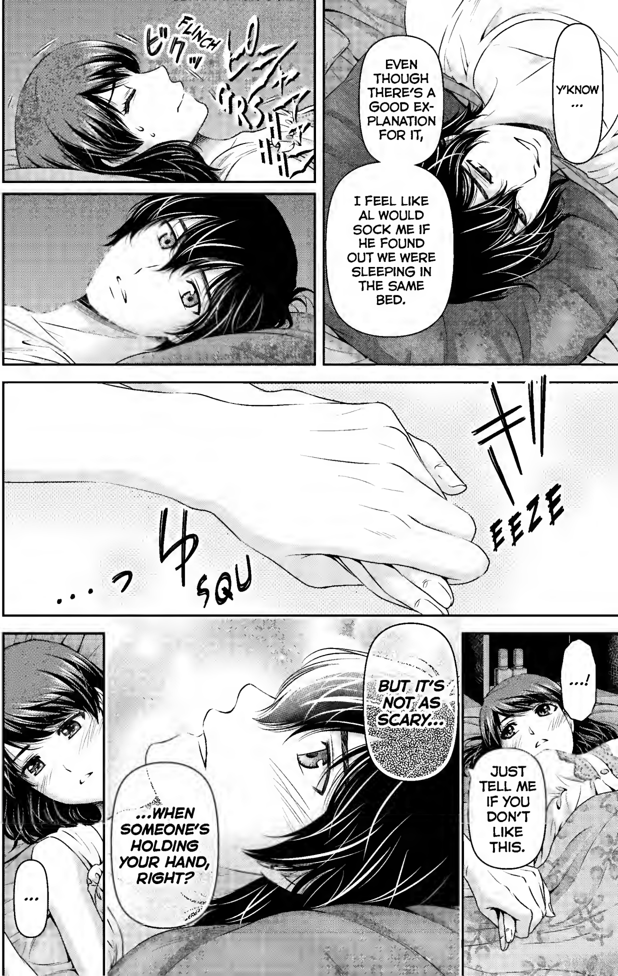

LET'S SEE. WILL A T-SHIRT AND SHORTS WORK?
ALSO, UN-
UNDER-WEAR...
GAAAH! THIS IS ONE THING I JUST CAN'T GET USED TO!
WHAT? YOU SEE THEM IN THE LAUNDRY ALL THE TIME, RIGHT?
SHE PROBABLY THINKS IT'S NO BIG DEAL TO ME...
STAY COOL.
COOL!
ガラ…
RRRUM
SHIV ブル
SHIV ブル
GRAB
SNAP
HWA-AAH!
WHAT, WHAT, WHAT?!
R-R-R-RUI?! ARE YOU OUT OF THE SHOWER ALREADY?!
THIS BETTER NOT BE A PRANK!

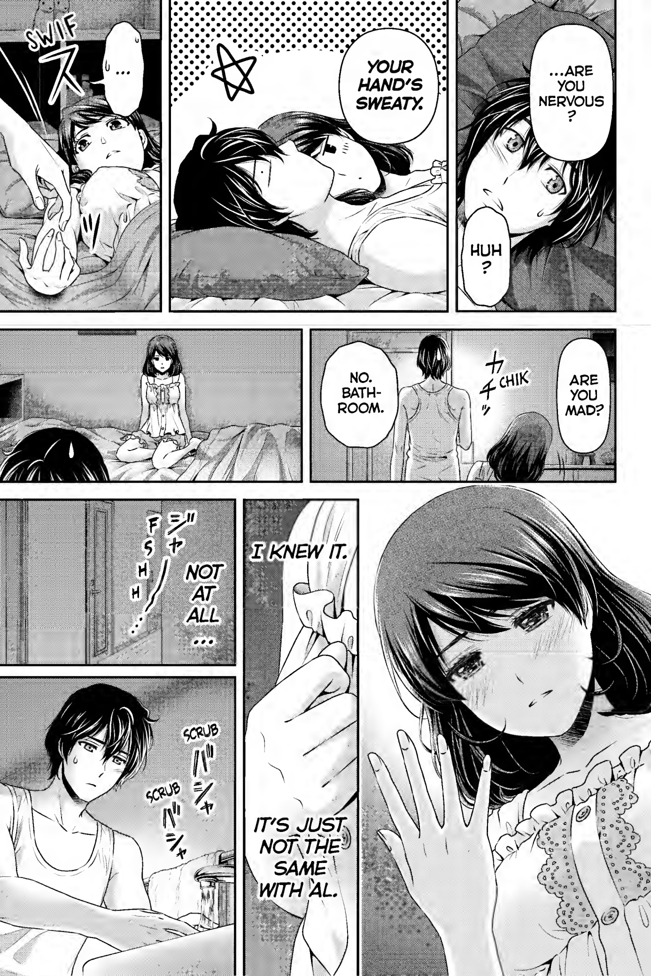

WAIT ...
HUH?
SKSH
THE LIGHTS ARE OUT IN THE OTHER HOUSES, TOO.
IS THE POWER OUT?!
SERIOUSLY? NOW?
AH!
THAT'S RIGHT, RUI...!
UGH ...
I CAN'T SEE A THING...
I-IT'S RISKY, BUT I'LL JUST NEED TO FEEL MY WAY AROUND.
RUIII! YOU OKAY?!
I'M FINE! WHAT HAPPENED?!
THE POWER'S OUT!
I'M BRINGING YOU SOME CLOTHES NOW!
WAIT THE-
WHIF

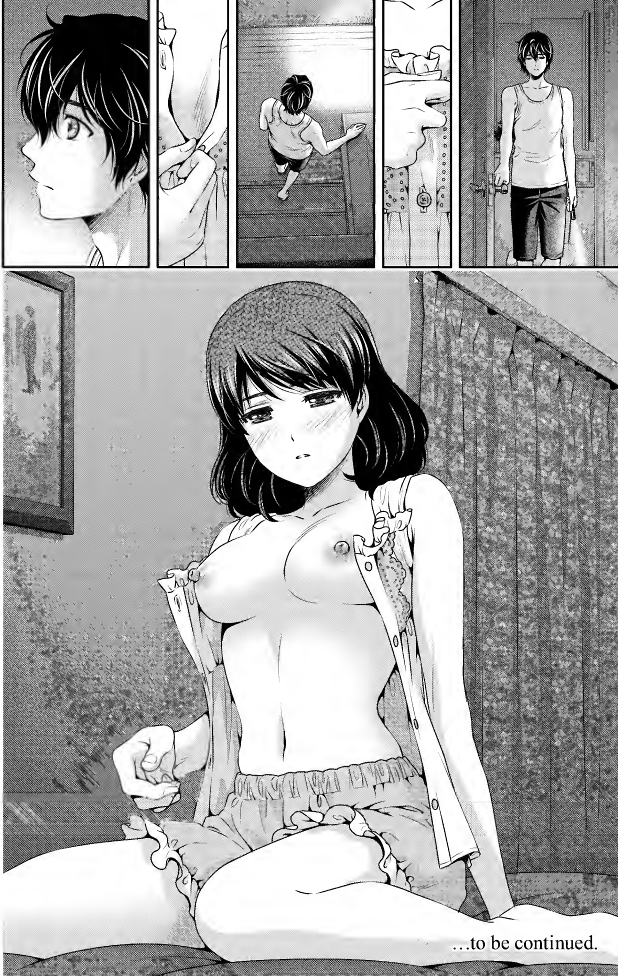

FTMP TMP TMP
AGH!
IT'S OKAY. I'M WEARING A TOWEL, SO I'LL JUST COME TO YOU!
WAIT, IT'S DANGEROUS!
SAYS THE GUY WHO FELL DOWN THE STAIRS.
SHUT UP!
MOOSH
HUH?
FLASH


AH ...
...!
FWIP
HWAH! S-S-SORRY!
BA-DOOM
ゴロゴロ
GRRR
...


R- RUI?!
ARE YOU... AFRAID OF LIGHTNING?
Y-YEAH,
I GUESS IT DOESN'T USUALLY FALL THIS CLOSE, BUT...
HOW LONG ...
IS THE STORM SUPPOSED TO LAST?
UHH.
THE FORECAST SAID ALL NIGHT...
WILL YOU ...
...STAY WITH ME TONIGHT, PLEASE?
FLICKER
ゴロ ゴロ ゴロ...
GRRRR


Y'KNOW…
EVEN THOUGH THERE'S A GOOD EXPLANATION FOR IT,
I FEEL LIKE AL WOULD SOCK ME IF HE FOUND OUT WE WERE SLEEPING IN THE SAME BED.
ビクッ
FLINCH
GRSH
SQUEEZE
…っ
…!
JUST TELL ME IF YOU DON'T LIKE THIS.
BUT IT'S NOT AS SCARY…
…WHEN SOMEONE'S HOLDING YOUR HAND, RIGHT?
…


...ARE YOU NERVOUS?
HUH?
YOUR HAND'S SWEATY.
SWIF ス
...
ARE YOU MAD?
カチッ CHIK
NO. BATHROOM.
FSHH ジャー
NOT AT ALL...
SCRUB バシャ
SCRUB バシャ
I KNEW IT.
IT'S JUST NOT THE SAME WITH AL.



…to be continued.